



RELIGION IN SCHOOLS

A Philosophical Examination

John A Sealey

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*To Marion,
Albert and Lol*

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of religious studies in schools (Religious Education, or RE) has changed rapidly over the past few years. Gone are the days when it was thought that the 'religion' period was intended to nurture and instruct the young Christian; when it was assumed that most children would grow into a Christian, or at least a religious, community. Perhaps it was inevitable that emergent secular societies, turning away from the 'confessional' approach to religion in schools, should introduce syllabuses of religion that reflect the secular mood. It became important to state that the teacher's aim was now to teach **about** religion. This was intended to convey the idea that pupils were no longer to be nurtured in religion but rather to be informed about the religious beliefs and experience of other people. The degree to which this different approach can be judged to have failed in practice may be seen in the literature that is still published by and for teachers advocating and encouraging distinctively religious views and attitudes within the classroom.

Apart from an extension of the subject to include a study of world religions, two important aspects of the traditional syllabus have remained, perhaps with different emphases and rationales. The first is the 'moral' component. No longer, it is true, is it thought that the moral element can be justified by the bible or some other religious authority. It seems likely that problems of a moral nature are still placed in the RE syllabus because 'moral education' has traditionally been associated with 'religious education.' Hence the RE lesson now includes topics like alcoholism, problems associated with old age and poverty, TV and video violence and international problems of an ethical nature. But we may seriously question whether secular morality has anything to do with religion. The second aspect of contemporary RE that might be thought to have roots in the older syllabuses is what is sometimes called a 'search for meaning' in life, or 'life stances.' This approach appears to involve debate on what 'religion' or a religious or non-religious 'life stance' may hold for the pupil personally. Do we have, in these recent developments, the heavy shadow of earlier 'confessionalism'? And is reading 'about' religion in the way it is sometimes described, sufficient to satisfy educational demands for a knowledge of religion? If we skirt around what some might think are crucial elements in the nature of reli-

gion, does this ensure some sort of religious 'neutrality' or 'objectivity' in the classroom that others think desirable? I sometimes wonder whether, in the 1960's and 1970's, we threw out the child with the bathwater.

While much research has been done to enlighten sociological, psychological, historical and methodological aspects of teaching religion comparatively little work has been produced on logically prior questions concerning the nature, aims, procedures and content of RE. We might ask, for instance: What is the logic of the grounds on which we include discussion of drug abuse in RE lessons? This raises questions about the nature, aims and content of the subject. It is not simply that questions of a philosophical sort ought to be looked at. We have no choice; for, merely by stating that, say, drug abuse (or 'poverty' or 'violence' etc.) should be part of the RE curriculum we are already committed to one particular view of RE, and a rationale, even where unstated, that goes with it. We are entitled to ask for a justification of such views.

Why do we teach so many different aspects of life and thought such as currently comprise the RE syllabus? Why do we teach religion at all? What useful purpose does it serve? Are there good reasons for teaching, in general education, a subject that some would relegate to the status of sheer superstition? It is not too much to expect that RE teachers, as well as others concerned with education, be introduced to the skills of philosophical analysis necessary for an examination of educational concepts in general and RE in particular. It is hoped that this book will provide an incentive for further critical scrutiny of some of the more important problems involved in the field.

THE PRACTICE AND THEORY OF EDUCATION

I Educational theory

As a field of practical activity, a process of teaching and learning, William Frankena says of education:

Even if we consider only formal instruction, it is not too much to say that the enterprise of education either has come to involve everyone alive or is expected to, that every other human endeavor of any importance depends on and is served by it, and that almost every other such enterprise is stimulated by it and plays a role with respect to it, either as a source for its premises and methods, as a part of its curriculum, or as one of its aims. In short, the idea of education behind it, if there is one, is one of the oldest and most important energizing and organizing ideas in Western culture - ranking with those of government, morality, science, and technology. (1)

What could be meant by 'the idea of education', here? What sort of theory is it appropriate to study in the quest for a rational basis for classroom practice? Three types of educational theory may be distinguished. The first two are closely allied. Firstly, the ideals and ideas of educationalists and philosophers of both past and present may be studied. Their views may be described as 'visionary' in so far as what these authors write concerning education is underpinned by certain ideological schemes and views about the nature of the 'ideal' society, or theories of human nature. A typical list of writers in this area would include Plato, Rousseau, Dewey and, more recently, the Marxist Paulo Freire. Secondly, educational theory may involve a study of certain teaching methods and the organization of schools and curricula. Such a study might include items like the 'discovery method' in which a pupil is encouraged to seek his own answers to small experiments or observations in his own environment, rather than the more traditional 'talk and chalk' method of teaching. Or it might include a study of 'interdisciplinary enquiry' which requires a pupil to research material across the disciplines based on 'core' problems posed by a teacher and group of teachers. (2) Or it might involve a study of classroom organization such as the merits or otherwise of the 'open-plan' school in which most of the pupils

in a given school are taught in one large room, often with temporary partitions allowing easy access between teachers and pupils with movement between them determined either by the subjects being studied or the interests of the pupil.

These two forms of educational theory are often organically connected in the sense that theories of methodology and organization sometimes arise in one or other of the ideals expounded by the 'visionary' theorists. It sometimes happens that a method or form of organization of the second type of theory is a stated direct consequence of a 'visionary' theory. Thus a study of the 'discovery method' may be traced directly to Dewey's concept of 'instrumentalism' - a view of human nature based on the philosophy of pragmatism which involves constant (psychological and biological) change; a world in which there are no beliefs and where 'truth' is whatever works successfully.

(3) It also happens that a theory of the second category presupposes a theory, or mixture of theories, of the first kind without a clearly stated recognition of the connections. An example of this is the methods and organization explicitly or implicitly enshrined in the theory of the freedom of the child underlying the activities at Summerhill school, established by the late A.S. Neill. In the principles underlying the practice of the school, as summarised by Erich Fromm in his Foreword to **Summerhill** (4), Neill's ideas of the freedom and happiness of the child clearly owe much to Rousseau's notions of the nature of man. And Neill's emphasis on democracy in education can hardly have failed to be influenced by 18th and 19th century theorists on the subject.

The third form of educational theory is not itself, strictly speaking, educational. It comprises, rather, the four traditional disciplines philosophy, psychology, sociology and history. I shall use the term 'discipline' to distinguish this form of theory from the first two. Applied to education the disciplines are commonly called: philosophy of education, psychology of education, sociology of education and history of education. To these four one may add comparative education, by which is generally meant a study of educational systems in geographically different areas, usually other countries. However, it is possible to reduce comparative education to one or more of the other four disciplines since, for example, an English educational theorist studying the educational system of Sweden can use no more than the techniques of the four disciplines. The main difference will be the cultural setting, and this, of itself, does not constitute a separate discipline. Comparative educational theory, therefore, may be understood in terms of the four disciplines. The difference between the first two types of

theory and the disciplines is crucial. And what I have to say in the following pages will be largely concerned to show the importance of the disciplines to educational theory.

II The relationship between 'theory' and 'discipline'

How are the first two forms of theory related to the disciplines, and how do they differ from one another? More importantly, what distinctive meaning do the disciplines have for educational practice? The first two types of theory differ from one another largely in emphasis, at least in the contemporary training of teachers. It is traditional and unexceptional, for example, for teacher training courses to include a study of the ideas of past educators such as Plato, Rousseau and Dewey. It is also unexceptional for students of education to discuss contemporary educational theories such as those mentioned in the second type of theory, viz. teaching methods and organization. The difference of emphasis is likely to be that the second category of theory will be regarded as more 'relevant' to the present needs of the school. For example, an examination of 'progressive' education as it may be seen in Dewey's 'instrumental' or 'experimental' method might be taken to be more immediate than a study of Dewey's philosophical views that lead to such a method. A.S. Neill's idea of the freedom of the child will be taken to have more meaning for present day education than a study of Rousseau's concept of the nature of man which may underly Neill's practice. While there are differences of the utmost significance - contemporary non-doctrinaire views on an 'integrated' curriculum or on the notion of 'creativity' may be strongly contrasted with Plato's doctrine of the 'ideal' state or Freiere's Hegelian idealism applied to teaching - they are at the same time both forms of **educational** theory.

On the other hand the disciplines are not theories of **education** as I have already suggested. In this sense the third category of educational theory is something of a misnomer. Educational philosophy, psychology, sociology and history are, rather, aspects of the parent disciplines. This is the main difference between the first two types of theory and the disciplines; one on which I wish to elaborate a little, and one that has important corollaries.

'Theory' and 'discipline' are related in the sense that the theories, such as those indicated, **use**, or perhaps, presuppose, the work of the disciplines.

We may pick out examples of educational theories that rely on one or more of the disciplines. Plato's educational proposals (i.e. what may be called his 'theory of education' (5)) arise directly from his **philosophical** arguments. The English educational theorist Elyot depends, for his ideas of education, on his interpretation of the traditional **historical** theme of the right of one social group to rule another. (The classical statement of this theme is, perhaps, Robert Filmer's **Patriarcha**, criticized in Locke's **First Treatise on Civil Government**; and this in turn involves political theory.) Without this historical foundation, Elyot's theory of education described in his work **The Governour** would have had no credence because it would have lacked a recognized rationale. Again, the notion of 'creativity' as an educational theory relies heavily on certain **psycho-logical** theories of learning. (6) Theories concerning the role of the teacher in society rely especially on the discipline of **sociology**. (7) In short, it may be said that the first two types of theory can be **reduced to**, or recognized by means of, one or more of the disciplines.

As commonly understood a discipline uses distinctive methods for the classification of material. These methods, as used in psychology, philosophy, sociology and history, purport to explain educational phenomena; and this includes educational 'doctrines', theories and slogans as well as classroom practice. Unlike the first category of theory - the 'visionary' approach - the disciplines do not set out to propound doctrines. Nor do they set out to establish theories of the second type. The disciplines, rather, bring to bear on educational theory and practice the skills and insights of the parent discipline. A much closer definition of 'discipline', one which highlights the main features, is offered by Peters. A 'discipline' is 'a form of learning that is structured in terms of a single type of truth-criterion and a determinate methodology that is derivative from it.' (8) The stricter definition can hardly be applied to the four disciplines used in education without considerably more analytic work being done. For instance, it is not clear that psychology and sociology can be categorised as different disciplines in this strict sense; it could be argued that both may be seen as different aspects of the same discipline 'science' in virtue of common empirical 'truth-criteria.' Nor is it clear that all would agree on a single type of truth-criteria for history. It is arguable that truth-criteria in history may involve a mixture of the empirical, literary and philosophical truth-criteria. Nevertheless, the critical notion of 'structured learning' seems to be more appropriately applied to the disciplines as far as we can categorise them than to the first two forms

of theory.

III The meta-educational basis for educational theory and practice

The four disciplines are not, of course, the only areas used in the study of an educational process. To them may be added the relevant contributions of ethics, politica, economics, psycho-analysis, statistics and other fields of thought. Together they may be seen as the tools of analysis for theories in education and for the practice of education. It may be said that a study of educational theory and practice is made more precise and meaningful by means of the disciplines and their supporting fields of thought, for they are not themselves 'educational.' They are therefore able to question the suppositions of educational theory in a way that the theories themselves cannot. They are, in this sense, meta-educational apparatus used for the better understanding of educational theory and practice. Thus 'education' is not itself a discipline, for it is clear that education requires a profusion of disciplines and techniques for its classification and practice. Further, the notion of an 'educationalist' becomes almost impossible to define, for it appears that an educationalist may mean no more (and no less) than a philosopher or psychologist trained to bring his skills to bear on particular educational problems. The significance in recognizing this is that it is no longer possible to see 'educational theory' as one single 'subject to be mastered' and labelled 'principles' or 'pedagogics', among others, but as a vast area of experience utilizing the expertise of many different specialists leading to a common goal. That goal is the explication of educational practice. It may be said at once that the idea 'Religious Education' is only one of many curriculum areas whose practice may be enlightened by the disciplinary examination of its contents and practice. After all, 'RE' (as I shall now speak of 'Religious Education') is, first and foremost, an **educational** activity, or, more accurately, it is that element in the educational process which deals with our knowledge of 'religion.'

IV The 'disciplines' as the more appropriate study in educational theory for teachers in training

These remarks on practice, theory and disciplines in education serve to remind one that the medley of material often taught in professional courses - usually called 'principles of education' or 'pedagogics' - dealing, as it often

does, with only the first two types of theory, may lead merely to the acquisition of teaching skills of the 'tips for teachers' variety. For such courses, consisting, as they often do, of teaching techniques, seminars on the social background of the child, community responsibilities, mental and physical development, psychological theories, some discussion of sociological case-studies and so on, in a rather general manner, and taught, as they often are, by a single 'education' lecturer, cannot but be fairly superficial. It is a 'hit or miss' affair because such elements may **or may not** include the expertise of the disciplines. Nothing in such courses guarantees it. The complexities of each of the issues discussed - and many important ones such as questions relating to the **aims** of education, the **meaning** of teaching, the **value** of academic assessment and so on - may often be excluded. Each area would seem to demand the attention of the distinctive disciplines. By analogy such undifferentiated courses are as inappropriate for the teacher in training as would be a single integrated course in medical school composed of medicine, surgery, pathology, tropical disease, radiography and bedside manners, taught by a general practitioner.

The four main disciplines will therefore bring to bear on educational theory and practice their specialized modes of operation. The trained historian will trace the antecedents, causes and effects, and will highlight the relevant contexts of contemporary educational practice. This will no doubt involve studies, to a greater or lesser extent, in local government, legal requirements, rights and limitations on rights within the various types of society and forms of school organization. The sociologist will put to work his special skills and insights into areas such as the role of the teacher in society, disciplinary problems within and outside the school, class distinction and so on. The psychologist will consider the assessment of mental ability, the effects of punishment on behavior and development, the effects of learning by discovery. The philosopher is the latest contributor to apply his methods to educational thinking. Yet in certain respects he is also the most important; for there would be little point in the exercise of psychological skills on the effects of, for example, punishment unless it is clearly understood what the concept 'punishment' stands for. In this sense, the skills of the philosopher in his 'underlabourer' capacity are indispensable to the understanding of education and its practice.

What makes the use of the disciplines of education more efficient in the training of teachers than the hit or miss introduction to doctrines and theories is the extent to which they rely on the non-educational parent disciplines with

the developed skills that are there available, rather than on the practical 'know how' of some successful pedagogue. The desirability of **integrating** the disciplines into a single course has been argued for, but is hardly possible. Consider, for example, the difficulties involved in attempting to combine a philosophical analysis with a sociological account of the concept 'teaching'. **Interdisciplinary** studies, on the other hand, is theoretically possible but can be ponderous in practice. However, it is not intended to discuss here problems of teaching methods and organization within the disciplinary approach.

Study in the field of education, then, involves what is to be taught, how it is to be taught and why. And this is to be approached by applying the skills of the disciplines to the practice and theory of education. The four disciplines used in educational studies are not just enormously helpful in clarifying the meaning, value, aims and use of educational practices, though they are certainly that. They are, more importantly, the most efficient means so far devised by educators for examining and assessing the meaning of educational practice and its underlying theories and values. The largest question is that concerning the meaning of education itself, its nature and aims. A discussion of religious education, from the philosophical point of view, would not get off the ground without some serious examination of education.

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- 1 Frankena, W., **Dictionary of the History of Ideas** (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons) vol. 2 p. 72.
- 2 See, for example, my article: **Interdisciplinary studies, in Forum for the discussion of new Trend in education**, Spring 1971, vol. 13, no. 2, p. 61.
- 3 See, for example, Bertrand Russell's essay: **The definition of 'Truth'**, in his **My Philosophical Development** (London: Allen & Unwin, (1959) especially pp. 178-180.)
- 4 Neill, A. S. **Summerhill** (London: V. Gollancz, 1962).
- 5 See, for example, R. L. Nettleship's **The Theory of Education in Plato's Republic** (London: OUP 1935).
- 6 See, for example, Liam Hudson's **Contrary Imaginations** (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1966) especially chapter 6.
- 7 See, for example, G. Grace's **The Role of the Teacher in Society** (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).
- 8 Peters, R. S. **Education and the Education of Teachers** (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977) p. 168.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT

I The distinctive contribution of philosophy to education

Mention has already been made of the fact that philosophy of education is one aspect of its parent body 'philosophy'. The philosophy of education, therefore, stands in the same relationship to philosophy as do the philosophy of science, of history, of religion and so on. Yet what I have called the 'parent body' of philosophy itself requires a word of explanation. For if there is a very general way of recognizing a piece of philosophy when we see it, it may not be clear what 'line', procedure or form is being adopted. Is it related to, say, existentialism, or phenomenism? Is it a form of 'realism', 'pragmatism' or 'idealism'? and so on. It is especially important to make as clear as possible those elements in traditional philosophy that are in use in contemporary educational philosophy; those particular philosophical methods and criteria that are being brought to bear upon current educational topics. 'The philosophical discovery of the concept's function' says F.C.S. Schiller 'is, perhaps, to be credited to Socrates...(and) used ... as the ideal unity whereby the human mind classifies and controls the confusing and confused multitude of particulars, and orders its experience. It was thus essentially an instrument of human cognition.' (1)

The essence (I use the word advisedly, in spite of Wittgenstein's supposed exploding of the 'myth' of essentialism in the formulation of his 'language-game' theory) of philosophy's technique in matters of educational moment is little changed from its Socratic roots. It consists in the 'classification and control' of recognized or unrecognized educational puzzles and 'confusions' by means of concept analysis; the 'instrument of human cognition.' Contemporary philosophers of education (I refer here to the Anglo-Saxon philosophers in general and to those of the so-called 'London school' in particular) follow Socrates closely in method, for definition plays an important role. One word, or group of words, is substituted for another in conditions that are described as **logically** necessary. This has the virtue of distinguishing philosophical discourse from scientific or empirical discourse. Such a logically necessary condition may be found in an examination of the Christian concept 'sin'. For the Christian concept 'sin' implies some form of 'estrangement'. 'Estrangement', we may say, is logically necessary

to the definition or explanation of 'sin'. It is part of what is meant by 'sin'. We define 'sin' **in terms of** 'estrangement'. Similarly, the concept 'creativity' **requires** a necessary connection with the notion of 'originality'. At the same time the logically necessary conditions required in defining concepts in this Socratic sense are not those used in axiomatic systems like mathematics. The logic referred to here is much more like Ryle's idea of 'informal logic'.(2)

A tightly knit logic, such as that of mathematics or symbolic logic is neither possible nor desirable. Aristotle's comments illustrate this point: 'The same exactness must not be expected in all departments of philosophy alike, any more than in all the products of the arts and crafts ... We must therefore be content if, in dealing with subjects and starting from premises thus uncertain, we succeed in presenting a broad outline of the truth: when our subjects and our premises are merely generalities, it is enough if we arrive at generally valid conclusions... it is the mark of an educated mind to expect that amount of exactness in each kind which the nature of the particular subject admits. It is equally unreasonable to accept merely probable conclusions from a mathematician and to demand strict demonstration from an orator.' (3) The concepts for analysis in education are ordinary language concepts used for very practical problems and require ordinary language solutions. More recently G.Reddiford has argued: 'Conceptual truths are not necessary in the sense that they forced upon us by the nature of the world, nor in the sense that they are knowable **a priori**, nor in being reducible to logical laws. Their necessity (i.e. their being more than merely **de facto**) lies in their expressing relationships within the conceptual frameworks that we employ and **must** employ, granted what is a contingent matter that we see things in the ways that we do and have the purpose that we have'. (4) It follows, of course, that we may not always be successful in coming to agreement on the meaning of a concept. It will always be theoretically possible for various characteristics of a concept to be disputed; that many concepts will remain blurred. It was this ambiguity in concepts that Wittgenstein presumably wished to draw attention to in his idea of 'language-games'. But it is arguable whether **no** concept can be marked out in quite distinctive ways. (Otherwise it would be difficult to conceive of even language-games.) Wittgenstein has drawn our attention to the **difficult** rather than the impossible. And part of that difficulty is to recognize and contend with the different forms of social milieux in which a concept arises. What is important in conceptual analysis in education is that we should begin to make progress in our understanding of the educational process, despite difficulties in agreement on what might

constitute necessary conditions for a concept. Like all traditional philosophy, conceptual analysis in educational questions knows no boundaries. As Wisdom pointed out 'Analytic philosophy has no special subject-matter. You can philosophize about Tuesday, the pound sterling, and lozenges and philosophy itself'. (5) The only proviso here is that conceptual analysis be confined to educational problems.

Philosophy, it needs hardly to be said, is not concerned with analysis of items in the same way as non-philosophic discussions on the same topics. Thus another element in philosophy which is to be brought to bear on educational matters is what Locke called philosophy's 'underlabourer' function; its 'second order' nature. The second order nature of philosophy consists in the activity of analysing the meaning of statements made in first order forms of knowledge. This is one of the reasons why philosophy has been described as 'talk about talk'. 'On this view' says Winch 'philosophy is parasitic on other disciplines; it has no problems of its own but is a technique for solving problems thrown up in the course of non-philosophical investigations'. (6) Education comes from 'nature, from men, or from things' said Rousseau, and substantiates the claim by reference to his observations about the world. This is a first order statement in that it rests on empirical evidence. The philosophical question 'what do you mean by education?' or by 'nature' etc., can only follow such statements; hence we may speak of its second order nature. As Winch argues, the position is the same for all social phenomena and therefore for education. (7) The philosopher has nothing to say unless and until the theologian, scientist or 'educationalist' has made some pronouncement. It must be added to this, again obviously, that such pronouncement does not have to be made explicitly; for, given the complexity of man's social institutions, there are many statements that are made by implication rather than explicitly. For example, it is sometimes assumed that logical conclusions are explained by logic; that there is a sort of inner logic forcing one to make a certain inference from given premises. As Lewis Carroll pointed out, by the persistent questioning of what comprises the concept of the logic of inference (8) one simply, in the end, **sees** that a certain conclusion follows a set of premises. It is worth noting that Wittgenstein himself was quite probably influenced by the works of Carroll in this respect. (9) Similarly in education it is often assumed that schooling has the objective of producing a certain kind of citizen; that since compulsory education is a social institution, the educated person must contribute, by means of his education, to the maintenance of society in one or other of its many forms. Such first order statements or assumptions call for the reflective, second order activity of the philosopher to begin work.

Philosophy of education, in this sense, belongs to no particular 'school' of philosophy such as those mentioned earlier, although it may be admitted that there is in the so-called 'London school' an emphasis on the practical concerns of the teacher in the classroom. The philosopher of education uses traditional analytic methods to examine concepts that are relevant to contemporary education.

II A new approach to educational theory

I have indicated that the philosophical context of this thesis may be found in what has been called the Anglo-Saxon form of philosophy of education and, in particular, within the so-called 'London school'. It is worth noting that, as Nordenbo has observed, although 'the characterization of the line of development (in analytic educational philosophy) is best suited to British and Australian educational philosophy', it is also true that such a form of thinking 'describes the perhaps most important outline in the American development' too. (10) It is, I think, no more appropriate in this thesis to argue for and against the background assumed than it would be to argue for and against any other philosophical tradition.

It is appropriate, therefore, to outline more firmly this perspective and the philosophical tradition that lies behind it. The first thing that needs to be said is that there has been a significant break with the two first forms of educational theory, earlier described. It is thought that both the 'visionary' approach and the more modern approach which emphasizes new methodologies such as 'integration' of curriculum subjects, 'discovery' methods, or slogans such as 'relevance' or 'teach children, not subjects!' are not adequate as an area of educational study for teachers in training. So much has already been indicated in the description of the theories given earlier. The important point to be picked out here is that little or no analytic philosophy is in fact contained in such courses. Plato's **Republic** may be generally regarded as a philosophical work but traditional educational courses in which Plato's educational ideas are discussed are not usually courses in **philosophy** - still less a philosophy having a specifically educational concern. At best they are courses in the **history** of ideas. Again, educational theory involving a study of more modern aspects of education may include topics such as A.S. Neill's idea of 'freedom' for the child in school, or the idea of 'community responsibility' as a significant element in a pupil's schooling. Yet although elements of psychology and sociology may be loosely connected to such aspects there seems to be no serious concern for an analysis of key concepts underlying these notions - those of 'freedom' and 'responsibility' for example. This is one of the emphases that has emerged in Anglo-Saxon analytic philosophy of education since the middle of the century.

It would be incorrect, perhaps, to regard this form of educational philosophy as a new school of thought within **Philosophy**. As we have seen, there is a long philosophical, if not a philosophy of education, tradition behind the enterprise. However, this quite different way of considering educational philosophy helps to explain why it is not possible to examine a philosophy of education tradition from which it sprang; for there is none. Writing in 1965 Peters could say 'In exploring the concept of education a territory is being entered where there are few signposts. To use Ryle's phrase, the "logical geography" of concepts in the area of education has not yet been mapped'. (11) More recently Langford and O'Conner write 'Indeed we are of the opinion that the philosophy of education is an embryonic field of enquiry in which no orthodoxies have been established'. (12) Finally, Mary Warnock was able to say, in 1977, 'It cannot any longer be seriously doubted that there is such a thing as the philosophy of education... It may, as some would maintain, be a very low branch of philosophy, but there it is, none the less.' (13) The new educational philosophy has, in fact, been regarded as a 'paradigm shift'. (14) What is meant by this, apparently, in the Anglo-Saxon and 'London school' approach is that it is peculiarly Kuhnian in character for it consists not in a basic philosophical change of structure but in a new way of seeing educational theory as applied to the practice of schooling. It is not surprising that, following hard on the heels of philosophical enquiry into matters of educational theory, such as those already mentioned, examination of curriculum subjects should be undertaken. But if the former, after only some twenty-five years, is in its infancy the latter has yet to struggle from its cradle. Moral education, although not a curriculum subject in its own right, has been seriously scrutinized by John Wilson and others since 1967. (15) The present work is intended to further that examination in the field of religious education.

III The relation of philosophy to other disciplines in educational theory

Consider the place of philosophy of education within the context of educational theory in general. Philosophy of education may best be regarded as one of a number of disciplines to be included in the umbrella term 'educational theory'. The interdisciplinary character of the four disciplines within a course of theory for teachers can hardly be overestimated. The fragmentary nature of the first two forms of theory cannot be expected to provide the comprehensive knowledge required by the professional teacher. The rather generalized and

cumulative experience of 'successful' teachers cannot be thought to provide it either. Only the insights, principles and judgments of all the relevant disciplines, with an eye to the critical understanding of underlying reasons that have been worked out in them, can come close to satisfying this knowledge. Thus a notable characteristic of philosophy in education (and somewhat externally viewed) is its relation to and dependence upon the other disciplines. For, the philosophy of education is part of the systematization of skills which can provide the teacher with the means of understanding the nature of his work in a professional, non-authoritarian manner (i.e. without being bound by external political or social bodies). These skills, together, have the effect of making the teacher himself an authority on what constitutes an educational process, what is to be taught and how it is to be taught.

In keeping with its close relationship to the other disciplines, and emphasizing its 'under-labourer' function, Anglo-Saxon philosophy of education is marked by its singular contribution to an examination of the first two forms of theory. And many of the issues in those forms are often only associated with the history, psychology and sociology of education. Yet most, if not all, of the topics mentioned require all four of the disciplines for a thorough examination. Clearly, such theories and slogans touch as much upon traditional philosophy, in the spheres of ethics and epistemology, as they do upon history, psychology and sociology. A course in educational theory which did not include all four disciplines could only be described as inadequate.

IV 'Form of life' rationale

It would be correct, perhaps, to say that the later Wittgenstein (i.e. the author of **Philosophical Investigations**) has played the biggest single part in shaping contemporary educational philosophy. The most fundamental and far-reaching notion is Wittgenstein's idea of a 'form of life'. Concepts in education typically analysed by contemporary philosophers may be judged more or less 'correct' since such concepts can be referred for their use to the social milieu in which they arise. To take a well-known example from Peters (which he uses as an analogy in his analysis of the concept 'education'), the notion of 'reform' is conceptually linked to a person's being 'changed for the better'. For, someone's being 'changed for the better' is what is meant by his being 'reformed'. (This is also an example of a 'logically necessary condition' mentioned earlier.) It

would be a contradiction to say 'my son has been reformed but has changed in no way for the better'. (16) The meaning of 'reform' is determined by the society which uses that concept. Concepts like 'reform' or 'education' may be analysed, more or less correctly, in terms of the 'language game' played by a particular society, and which constitute the 'form of life' of that society. Hamlyn says 'our form of life is, Wittgenstein says, the given, indeed the only thing that deserves that name. It is not the case that the possibility of such differences in forms of life or sensibility implies a merely subjective view of the world. We can raise the question of what is objective or otherwise only within the conceptual scheme that we have, given our form of life, since to ask whether something is objective is to ask whether it is objective as a such-and-such. To have classified something as a such-and-such is already to have invoked and applied a set of concepts; we cannot get outside these concepts altogether to raise questions about objectivity independent of them'. (17) In relating this way of thinking to educational psychology Hirst and Peters say that although 'the inability to emerge with a neat set of logically necessary conditions for the use of a word like "knowledge" or "education" is not necessarily the hall-mark of failure', conceptual analysis, nonetheless, can 'enable us to see more clearly how a concept is connected not only with other concepts but with a form of social life that rests on a network of interlocking assumptions'. 18) Further, 'By determining which cases (of a concept) are central we come to learn a lot more, not just about words, but about the structure of our social life and the assumptions which underlie it'. (19) To map out the logical geography of concepts within the given form of life is the task of the philosopher.

It does not follow from this that concepts within a form of life are culturally bound in any rigid sense. Nor does it follow that concepts within a society or even between societies should invariably have quite different meanings, as Hamlyn has indicated. Hirst argues:

As distinct from a Kantian approach, it is not my view that in elucidating the fundamental categories of our understanding we reach an unchanging structure that is implicit, indeed **a priori**, in all rational thought in all times and places. That there exist any elements in thought that can be known to be immune to change, making transcendental

demands on us, I do not accept. I see no grounds for accepting that being rational in any sphere is a matter of adherence to a set of principles that are of their character invariant, nor do I see why formal systems of relations of a mathematical kind should be regarded as providing any necessary ideal of rationality against which all other forms must be assessed. Being rational I see rather as a matter of developing conceptual schemes by means of public language in which words are related to our form of life, so that we make objective judgments in relation to some aspect of that form of life. The precise character of those schemes is a matter of investigation, not something that can be laid down in advance, in terms of some ideal, no matter how successful or attractive one particular scheme may be'.

(20)

(We shall have occasion, in a later chapter, to see how precisely this way of thinking is used by Hirst to support his 'forms of knowledge' thesis.) By means of those judgments expressed in a public language, Hirst goes on, there is 'meaning' and 'the anchor of reason and sense'. Thus 'the possibility of objectivity and sense, even if not resting on absolute principles, would seem to rest on a fair degree of stability of judgment and agreement between men'. The very 'generality of certain conceptual schemes and their relatively timeless status' (Hirst is here referring to Kant's *a priori* conception of mathematics, space, time and causality) are 'a measure of the stability and near universality of very significant features in human nature and the human situation'. (21) Also, 'common features' (in empirical and social concerns) 'would seem to cast serious doubt on the view that major forms of thought of different communities are mutually incomprehensible'. (22)

What follows from the idea that concepts are not just 'culturally relative' but have a certain degree of stability recognized through a shared public language is that, theoretically at any rate, a society may hold not simply different concepts from other societies but also mistaken or only partly formed ones. And the sort of thing that will enable us to come to agreement when such mistakes become clear has nothing to do with merely counting heads, finding a 'consensus' or coming to a democratic majority decision. Agreement will come by means of what Wisdom calls 'talk'. It will have nothing to do with mere 'persuasion'; it will have a great deal to do with whether one concept or another is better able to account for the way in which the world is so far as we are already agreed. There is nothing new in this. It is the way one normally acquires a concept in the first place. But it is sometimes worth stating the obvious; that it is possible to hold insufficiently thought out, or simply inaccurate, concepts as well as holding different concepts. (23) Emerging from this obvious point is the

more important one: that philosophical analysis can help to determine, often cross culturally, the adequacy of concepts within the framework of an already agreed form of life. Thus it may be understood that, at least in the western world, the concept 'education' is likely to have certain crucial 'family resemblances' that mark it off from other social activities; it may have common features on which we should all wish to agree.

V Synthesis in philosophy of education

Another significant contribution of Anglo-Saxon philosophy of education is marked by its willingness and ability to 'crystalize' basic concepts in its effort to 'refine practice', as Scheffler would put it. (24) And it does not, in the last resort, shy away from making the leap from analysis to synthesis; to the point where first order judgments cannot but be made in the interests of improved educational practice which is, of course, the *raison d'être* of the philosophy of education. Analysed practical judgments in educational concepts are not beside the point in educational philosophy; they are one of its major objectives. Thus 'philosophers, operating under the banner of "critical evaluation", have also a duty to try to advance ... constructive suggestions relating to education'. (25) To claim that philosophy's second order nature draws attention to its use as a 'tool' by which we arrive at clearer judgments is not to say that 'philosophers ... should never try to improve any of the concepts they have investigated'. (26) (Flew is here referring to philosophy in general, but the point is as valid in educational philosophy.)

It is, indeed, questionable whether it is meaningful to speak of a 'leap' from analysis to synthesis in educational philosophy. That is to say: can there be a strict divorce between 'ends' and 'means' in education? As Hirst argues: 'In the present state of philosophical knowledge, I prefer to accept as legitimate in educational theory all the elements that must occur in it if it is to fulfill its function for educational practice, including the rigorous critical discussion of values, even when this calls in question prevailing ideas of human welfare ... Though I do not for one moment think the value judgments can be "proved" from factual components, I do accept that there is no logical connection between them that is important in determining educational practice'. (27) Of some of the essays in his edited *Aims in Education* Hollins makes the comment that they are 'models of how analysis can be carried out. They are also written to convince, to support ideals, which the authors consider worthwhile; (which is) another answer to those who dismiss analysis as negative or irresponsible'. (28)

Contemporary philosophy, as I have outlined it, does not begin with a 'theory' or 'vision' of what man and society is or ought to be then proceed to frame its arguments in accordance with that vision, as did the philosophic 'system buiders' of the past and as do many contemporary theorists. Instead, it takes ordinary language concepts, examines them by using philosophy as a 'tool' then returns the analysed concepts to the teacher, not with mere recommendations or stipulations but with clearly defined, logically deducible and practical corollaries arising from the analysis.

VI 'Aims' in education

It hardly needs to be said that one of the most important educational concepts for the philosopher to examine - and one of the most elusive - is that of 'aims'. Much has been written on this topic (29) and there is more to be said, but it is not appropriate to examine the concept in great detail here. However, one of the issues involved in the discussion and pertinent to our enquiry into the nature of relious education is the question of whether the objective of education is to prepare young people for a certain, pre-determined style of life and to prepare them to take up employment (what may variously be called the 'extrinsic' or 'utilitarian' or 'instrumental' aim of education); or, on the other hand, whether education is an 'end' in itself; that is, a process whose aim is no more than a description of that process. (We may refer to this as an 'intrinsic' or 'non-instrumental' aim.) It follows from the latter view, of course, that education has no aim beyond itself, for we may say 'the aim of education (where 'education' stands for the development of the rational mind) is to educate (i.e. to develop the rational mind)'. If it is asked: **Whose** 'aim' is being referred to here? it may be replied 'Obviously, the educationalist's'; or 'Society'; or 'The teacher's'. But perhaps the answer is less simple. Could we not say, for instance, that if society wishes the next generation to inherit its store of knowledge and skills then the **nature** of that knowledge and those skills might well determine the aim, for the several forms of knowledge that comprise the inheritance of modern society have a cllaim to independence in a fairly obviously way. (For instance, the nature of mathematics predetermines that a student who has studies the subject will understand the concept 'number' - regardless of what any particular educationalist or teacher thinks about it, and regardless, too, of what society might wish the student to do with this knowledge.)

What I hope will emerge concerning the notion 'aims' in education is that a discussion of the nature of education will also disclose its aim. This is already implied in the conceptual point that 'education' has no end beyond itself. At least one thing appears clear at the outset: if education has extrinsic, instrumental aims then the problem of choosing one or more from others is dauntingly vast. Is it a group of values peculiar to a single society? Is it one of many different political ideologies? Does it mean qualifying students for particular forms of employment? (and if it is this, then what forms? and who is to decide?) Is it to give students the choice of what to learn? (in which case we may ask on what basis students will be able to make a rational choice). If it is a combination of more than one of these aims then who or what would decide that? And finally, could such aims be legitimately described as 'educational'? Would they not, rather, be political, economic, moral, religious etc., aims? And if they are, then why describe them as educational? For it has been argued that 'education' is not the name of any particular process or activity that can have a target, but the name of a process that **includes** targets, such as learning mathematics, history and science and, collectively, as the development of the rational mind by means of these things. (30)

What is to be said of a flat rejection of the notion that education has no extrinsic aims? The rejection might be stated thus: If by 'education' one considers only the development of the rational mind and the autonomous individual through the passing on of a knowledge and understanding of the world, but that no instrumental aims - such as teaching students to behave well or getting them to be qualified for work - are allowed in the definition, then let us simply reject this notion of 'education' and call it something else, perhaps 'training' or 'instructing' or 'indoctrination' or 'schooling', and we shall then be free to include instrumental aims of this sort, for we wish to include both intrinsic and extrinsic aims in the schooling process. In reply to this it may be asked, for example: Do we **want** to instruct students to behave only in one way? Do we **want** to tell them 'this (democratic?) pattern of behaviour is good, and that (communist?) pattern of behaviour is bad'? 'Do this but not that'? If this is not what we wish and, instead, we wish to give moral knowledge and understanding so that students themselves might choose, then we are left with no distinctive extrinsic aim that students shall 'behave well'; we have stepped short of the form of education we thought we did not want.

A similar question may be asked of the instrumental objective 'work'. In what sense do we see the state school system qualifying students for work? To what extent and in what ways should we teach students expertise in, for example, plumbing, motor mechanics or business? Surely it would be agreed that our intention is to introduce students to a knowledge of such matters by getting them to acquire basic skills necessary for certain operations in these fields, by getting them to understand the key concepts involved, such as the principles underlying the work of the plumber, motor mechanic or businessman? Yet if this is the case how could it be said that anything different is going on from educating them in the way already implied by the conceptual notion? Unless we teach students to behave in one way rather than another (e.g. 'Do this, not that!'), and unless we are training them for specific jobs outside school (e.g. so that students are recognized, qualified plumbers etc. when they leave school) then the schooling process can have had no instrumental aims; for the process of getting students to know and understand the principles of, say, mechanics, is part of the intrinsic process of education. We discover, on analysis, that what we originally thought was an aim beyond education (e.g. becoming good democrats or becoming mechanics etc.) was no more than an aim **within** education. Getting students to understand the work of a plumber, acquiring certain skills and so on, is no different in principle from introducing students to the fields of mathematics, history, art, religion and so on. That which is involved in the acquisition of knowledge and skills, by the various methods of teaching, telling, drilling, training and so on, is called 'education'. What we at first thought were the extrinsic aims of education (a way of behaving, a certain form of employment etc.) turns out on reflection to be, conceivably, the aims of the student as an autonomous person; and we might say that the 'autonomous person' is a state produced by 'education' but is hardly anterior to it.

The non-instrumental view does not claim, of course, that education has no use in the trivial sense that all learning may be useful for something, but it does emphasize that education does not, perhaps cannot, manufacture pre-specified, predicted sorts of people equipped with specialist skills and attitudes and conditioned for a certain kind of adult life. There is nothing new in the non-instrumental view of education, as Marrou shows:

It is from the Ancients that we have inherited our ideas of a "general culture" - which ... is one of the meanings of the ambiguous term *egkuklios paideia*. Classical education flattered itself that it could provide a standard of training in all subjects for every type of student. It aimed at developing all his potentialities without mutilating a single one, so enabling him to fulfil to the best of ability whatever task should later be imposed upon him by life or the demands of society or his own free choice. Ideally such an education was supposed to result in a kind of indeterminate human product of very high intrinsic quality, ready to respond to any circumstance.' (31)

This view, says Marrou 'cannot be explained away by glib references to its aristocratic origins for such an education was 'not unaware of the possibility of technical development; it simply rejected it. Its one aim was to form the man himself, the kind of man who would ultimately be ready for anything but had no special bias in any particular direction'. Education was 'chiefly interested in the man himself, not in equipping technicians for specialized jobs'. (32) One possible consequence arising from the view that education has extrinsic aims is that education will take the form of a 'first order' process. By this I mean a schooling that is necessarily linked to goals that are not in themselves educational, such as post-school employment. (I shall elaborate the distinction between 'first order' and 'second order' in chapter four.) Such a process will tend to concentrate the teacher's mind on a selective type of curriculum and on a selective kind of classroom methodology to go with it; the extrinsic aim will tend to dominate the content and methods of the educational process. But if the logic of extrinsic aims for education is defective, as has been argued, then the first order process of education that is linked to it will also tend to show weaknesses. The attention of the teacher will be drawn to a curriculum determined by external factors, such as the state of the employment market and how the student might be better fashioned for it, rather than a curriculum determined by man's knowledge and experience of the world in general.

What calls for some appraisal of the non-instrumental view of education is the fact that some modern theorists continue to interpret education in the instrumental way, as having external objectives like 'being moral' or 'being trained for work'. This interpretation of education shows itself to be ambivalent when the same theorists recognize that students may, in a more liberal education, also be taught views contrary to others; the right to reject traditional values

and so on. It does not seem reasonable for these theorists to hold, at one and the same time, that a student shall 'be moral' in specific, currently accepted ways, or be 'trained' for a specific part of the labour market, **and** at the same time be taught in such a way that they may reject these ends.

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- 20 Hirst, P. H., **Knowledge and the Curriculum** (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974) pp. 92-93.
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- 23 It has been argued, by John Wilson, for example, in his article 'Concepts, contestability and the Philosophy of Education', (**Journal of Philosophy of Education** vol. 15, no 1, January 1981), that 'If there are different uses of a term X, then we have different ranges of meaning and so different concepts: what then can be meant by talking of "the proper use of the concepts"?' (p. 98) This seems to be very much like claiming that there can never be a misuse of a concept and that a concept can never be refined or improved. This, in turn, would appear to lead to the claim that people can never disagree in a 'form of life'; that 'hermeneutics' is a non-starter; that language-games are mutually exclusive in an absolute sense, and so on. One simply

articulates different - and non-transferable - concepts. Wilson's thinking seems to lead us straight to solipsism. For counter arguments see G. Reddiford's paper 'Conceptual analysis and education' (1972) op. cit., and P. Snelders' reply to Wilson in the January 1981 volume: 'An essentially contesting Philosopher.'

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Chapter Three

AN INSTRUMENTALIST'S VIEW OF EDUCATION: MARY WARNOCK

That's a bad sort of eddication as make folks unreasonable

-George Eliot

I 'Virtue' as an extrinsic aim

Let us consider the educational model of one of the most recent exponents of the instrumental view. Under the heading 'the good life' Warnock distinguishes three main aims for education. They are: a) Virtue (viewed as the teaching of substantive moral positions); b) Work (by which is meant a career); and c) Imagination (by which is meant creating an 'awareness of human feelings and potentialities, including (the student's) own, that comes with knowledge of what other people have written, painted, built or composed'. (1) I shall examine only the aims 'virtue' and 'work' since an analysis of these would appear to be sufficient for the purpose of making out what the instrumental model involves.

Arguing against John Wilson's 'rationalism' (2) Warnock claims that teaching a 'theory' of moral education 'cannot teach (students) to **be moral**, that is to behave well'. (3) Morality is 'exceedingly unlike arithmetic' in that it does not have an 'abstract life of its own. There is therefore no sense to be attached to saying one can "do" it in the classroom, and apply it later, as need arises. There is no such thing as "doing morality", only behaving well or badly'. (4) Warnock's instrumental argument appears to rest precisely on the idea that morality is different in kind from other subjects taught. Morality is not, she says, like mathematics which may be confined to the classroom; it is an area of everyday behaviour which all students must be taught to act out, not merely taught in terms of explanation. 'It is not just rationality which needs to be shown in moral decisions; they must also be manifestations of virtue. It may even be that the more a man has a fixed and steady disposition the less he has to take decisions at all. He may behave well, that is truthfully, loyally, bravely, kindly, fairly, without being much tempted by the opposite course ...Teaching a certain kind of argument would hardly go any way at all towards teaching someone to be of his kind'. (5) But if morality is not to be learned 'theoretically', it must be learned by 'experience'; and if learning

by experience is 'an important part of learning what it is to be morally good... then it follows that this part of morality must be taught to children by example ... It is therefore all the more necessary for teachers to know what they are at, what characteristics they are displaying, since their virtues and vices will form part of the whole picture of possible moral behaviour that a child will, gradually, build up'. (6) To be quite clear, let us remember that Warnock is not speaking of 'moral education' as a subject on the school timetable, one among others. She is saying that the aim of **education** is to make people moral, thus making a necessary connection between the extrinsic aim 'the moral person' and a curriculum that will be shaped to this end. And, importantly , Warnock seems to have no doubts about what this 'moral person' is to look like.

Attempts to teach the nature of morality in a 'rational' way, that is, attempts to teach **criteria** for recognizing a moral position, according to Warnock, have little or nothing to do with it. 'We all know' Warnock continues 'that it is difficult to relate classroom French to the living language spoken in France, or to connect "school" literature with what one might want to read on one's own account. It seems an unnecessary hazard to introduce a situation in which, having done one's moral prep. for the week, one can forget it'. (7) The teacher following this instrumental model of education tells students not merely what the phenomenon is but **to be moral**. He does not just give them the tools, explain what virtue is, what distinguishes 'moral' from 'non-moral' or 'immoral', how one must think of an act **if** one is to be virtuous, and so on. He is concerned in particular to tell them **to act** in one way rather than another. One of Warnock's own examples is, in speaking to a student a teacher might say 'You did wrong to pretend to have read what you haven't read. Read it now'. (8)

Warnock's charge, that the teaching of moral theory or the explication of moral rules cannot teach students to be moral, 'to behave well', is obviously correct, for it may be that a student will not in fact behave well on his having been taught what 'behaving well' means. And clearly there is at least one sense in which morality is different from mathematics. While one may or may not 'do' mathematics outside the classroom the same choice is not available to the practice of morality; for, given the society we live in, we are faced with moral situations within which we must act.

We may note two objections that can arise from a consideration of teaching 'virtue' in schools. First, one can define education in such a way as to exclude the possibility of extrinsic aims for it. This is done by Peters where he argues, for example, that specific competences such as those required in 'being a doctor' or 'being an engineer' or in this case, where he might argue 'being virtuous' or 'behaving well' are better described in terms of 'training'. The 'concept of "training"' says Peters 'has application when a skill or competence has been acquired which is to be exercised in relation to a specific end or function or in accordance with the canons of some specific mode of thought, or practice. If it is said that a person is "trained" the questions "To do what?", "For what?", "As what?", "In what?" are appropriate; for a person cannot be trained in a general sort of way. Training has its natural home in the realm of skills where something has to be done or manipulated ... With "education", however, the matter is very different; for a person is never described as "educated" in relation to any specific end, function, or mode of thought'. (9) Thus the Spartans were morally and militarily trained. They knew how to fight and they knew what was right and wrong...But we would not say that they had received a moral or military education; for they had never been encouraged to get a grasp of the principles underlying their code'. (10) According to Peters, being told what is right and wrong is not a form of education but of training; a much more limited activity. Being taught to 'behave well', therefore, cannot, on this view, be an aim of **education**.

If it were claimed, on the other hand, that teaching students to 'behave well' is merely a correct account of what actually goes on in schools then the claim is at best ambiguous. It is true that teachers tell students to do this and not that, but such instruction cannot be **known** to be moral instruction since no criteria for what it is to 'behave well' in the moral sphere have been laid down by the teacher, far less taught. For, in rejecting Wilson's 'rational' approach Warnock excludes debate on what is to **count** as 'morality'. It is the lack of clarity concerning a moral aim for education that makes an instrumental view of education inadequate; for it makes no sense to have to admit we cannot identify what is being taught. Or is it to be supposed that a teacher's own moral education has taught him -and allows him to tell others - what is right? It does not seem appropriate for us simply to assume that a teacher's own stance is indeed a moral stance; nor can it be assumed without question that society

wishes education to **mirror** existing norms with no analytic thought on the matter. While it may often be thought, therefore, that teachers instruct students to 'behave well', there are in fact no clear grounds for determining what such instruction might mean, and no clear reason for thinking that such instruction is in fact desirable. We may say, therefore, that the instrumental approach with its extrinsic ends is incoherent at this point. On the other hand it can surely be said with some confidence that what education does in the common view is to explain, to explore by teaching, what the experience of man is - including the moral experience. And this is an intrinsic aim, not an extrinsic one; for it allows of the 'indeterminate human product of very high intrinsic quality, ready to respond to any demand made upon the intellect or circumstance' (11) without pre-determining 'ends' as to how the educated person must behave, and without prejudicing the second order nature of the educational process. And if there is no extrinsic objective (e.g. that the student shall be 'virtuous') then students will not be tied down to specific normative judgments such as 'turn the other cheek'. They will be taught, rather, what it means to resist or not to resist aggression. The trouble with telling students to 'turn the other cheek', which implies an attitude of non-aggression, is that students are effectively barred from holding an opposing moral attitude which might be 'pay back two strokes for every one received'. Now quite apart from the common counter arguments - that the teacher is not 'educating' but 'conditioning' or 'stunting the growth of individual autonomy and responsibility' etc. - the teacher who thus opposes the teaching of apparently viable alternative moral attitudes cannot be teaching in a meaningful way what morality is. The teacher who teaches a student **to** 'turn the other cheek' as a substantive moral attitude must refuse to see 'pay back two strokes for every one received' as a viable alternative way of behaving. More likely we would simply **assert** that one form of behaviour is moral while others are not, as Mary Warnock indeed does. The teacher is hardly likely, therefore, to teach opposing codes of behaviour without arbitrariness and this quality in a teacher, one might suppose, is not generally desired by society nor can it be thought that teaching in such a fashion is what is commonly meant for education.

II 'Work' as an extrinsic aim

The second aim for education presented by Warnock, within the general framework of the objective 'the good life', is 'work', by which is meant employment. For, Warnock states 'work is, and must always be an ingredient in the

good life; that a life without work would always be less good than a life which contained it; and that to be totally unemployed is indeed a dreadful fate'. (12) Even 'though it may be something we have to pretend to wish to avoid, and quite genuinely be something we have to steel ourselves to begin' work is 'something we value for its own sake, as well as for its reward'. For 'all work is effort to make or change things or reduce them to order' and 'we value (work) because we want to be in control of things'. (13) 'Work is therefore a proof of human freedom' and 'the desire to work and to earn is therefore obviously part of the desire to be free'. (14)

These 'obvious' generalizations have to be stated since 'it is with them as background that the notion of education for work has to be justified'. (15) What, according to Warnock, could justify 'education for work'? Justification appears to be based on the supposition that 'people actually **want** to work' and 'it would be a disservice to (pupils) to educate them in such a way that this desire was less likely to be satisfied'. (16) From this it follows that 'the ideal of a curriculum should be that what everyone begins with should be useful for the next step, so that at the stage where some people leave school they will be qualified for work, while those who stay will be qualified for the next bit of education'. (17) Also, Warnock goes on 'a common framework for the curriculum at school up to the earliest age at which pupils may leave is not difficult to conceive. The crucial point... is that within the framework there should be enough diversity to accommodate different interests'. (18) In order to 'help a child to satisfy his desire to work' it is necessary for schools to 'sink their scruples and consent to listen to what it is that the outside world demands. If industry wants people who can calculate and understand complicated plans and read a balance sheet, then industry must say so and pupils must be taught'. (19) 'If (schools) are not to fail in their duty' they must 'consider the state of the market'. (20)

Included in this future-directed curriculum should be the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics; a study of the society the pupil is to work in together with 'some notion of the development historically of the institutions among which, and subject to which, he lives', (21) and physical sciences and technology. Economics, geography, 'classical history' or sociology and a foreign language will be offered to those with 'interests' and 'ability' in them. (Other elements in the school curriculum are to develop the 'imagination', the third 'aim' for education in pursuit of 'the good life'; they include art, music, litera-

ture, drama and, where possible, 'solitude' for periods of 'contemplation' and reflection.)

We may be agreed that 'work' is not always, or even generally, the aim of education in schools, and that a value position lies behind any justification we wish to give for what the aim of education might be. What is significant in philosophic debate is the reasonableness, the 'rationality' or coherence if you will, of the arguments used for justifying the position advocated. Warnock offers a justification for the aim 'work' that is subject to the same criticism we levelled at the aim 'virtue', namely that of ambiguity. We shall discover, I believe, that this weakness applies across the board to arguments for external aims for education. Having stated that 'work' is a means of control and consequently 'a proof of human freedom' which is, apparently, a 'desire', Warnock concludes that 'people actually want to work'. And this desire to work is, according to Warnock, a desire to earn money in order to live for she specifically contrasts it with 'money handed out as a right' (22) presumably in the form of state aid or private charity. ('It is hard to reconcile oneself to being the object of charity.' (23)) Warnock adds that even working for **no** money is better than not working at all.(24)

It is at the very least difficult, in my view, to imagine that people 'want to work' for money in order to live. A large inheritance or a vast amount of capital working for one on the stockmarket would seem to be far more desirable (preferably administered by a manager). But assuming the statement reflects the facts and people actually prefer the labour market and a five-day week (or, at a pinch, work without pay), can it be seriously maintained that compulsory schooling is justified in claiming this as an **educational** objective? For other, it may be thought, more appropriate, claims have been made for this objective - apprenticeships and training schemes for technicians, craftsmen, lawyers, doctors and teachers, for example. Warnock adds that education for work 'does not entail that (a pupil) should be destined for a **certain sort** of work'. (25) A pupil, according to this, must be prepared by his education for any opening his ability and interest allow for him. But this raises the major question: What would a curriculum look like that aims at the 'work' objective, and how would it differ from an education whose curriculum aims at nothing beyond introducing pupils to all forms of human experience? For if we find that the former curriculum is substantially coextensive with the latter we shall

not be justified in claiming that education is **for** anything more specific than the development of the individual and of the rational mind which, of course, is equivalent to saying that a pupil is being educated in the non-instrumental sense. If, on the other hand, we were to find that a curriculum designed for the extrinsic aim 'work' or 'employment' is limited by that aim, than the aim 'work' determines and restricts the boundaries of education, then it might be necessary to concede a point to the instrumental view.

The subject headings of Warnock's 'work' curriculum have been mentioned briefly. They are: reading, writing, arithmetic, a study of the history of the environment in which the worker is to live and work, physical sciences and technology. 'Cooking' is mentioned also. (26) Necessary to the 'imagination' is a study of art, music, literature and drama together with periods set aside for 'contemplation' of these. Finally, for those capable and interested enough, there will be economics, geography, 'classical history' or sociology and a foreign language. As Warnock observes, even without those subjects necessary for development of the imagination, 'suddenly, the school timetable is pretty full'. (27)

What Warnock would offer for a life of employment (along with important elements for the individual's 'reflective capacity' (28) is, with the exception of religion, a curriculum substantially coextensive with one that would introduce pupils to all forms of human knowledge. It would seem difficult to consider the proposed curriculum as having any specific form of external objective such as 'work'. It can hardly be said that, at the compulsory leaving age of sixteen, a pupil will be 'qualified for work' (29) unless by this phrase is meant the trivial point that a pupil is now ready to **train** for a specific job. Clearly, being trained for a specific job does not require the sort of education Warnock advocates, for with or without 'basic skills', and certainly without the other subjects mentioned, any pupil of a certain physical and mental maturity can be said to be ready to be trained for a job. Western industrialised society has long since used, abused and withdrawn from that view. Warnock specifically states, as we have seen, that pupils should not 'be destined for a **certain sort** of work'. What, then, could Warnock mean by claiming that pupils at sixteen should be 'qualified for work' by means of the education offered?

We seem forced to consider the possibility that the view offered by Warnock is incoherent. A comprehensive curriculum such as that proposed by Warnock is ill-conceived as a specifically utilitarian or instrumentally useful measure; it does not 'qualify' anyone for anything external to the process of education. It appears to be unnecessary, therefore, to concede any special meaning to the instrumental view, for the curriculum produced does not seem to be determined or restricted in any way by some extrinsic aim 'work'. And this is also why we may allow that Warnock's third aim 'imagination' is not an external aim for it simply consists of areas of human experience taught for their intrinsic value.

It might be argued by some that the later stage of secondary education is certainly instrumental in character, for from the age of sixteen students opt to specialize to a high degree. A student may choose, let us hypothesize, to spend most of the following three years studying to be a motor mechanic. Any other subjects that may be taken by the student during this period are strictly subsidiary; the student leaves school, for all practical purposes, as an 'educated' motor mechanic. In this sense at least, it might be argued, education has a distinctly extrinsic aim. However, it may be seen that from the age of sixteen, at which point an almost free choice of subject geared to some part of the industrial machine - the labour market - is made, a **qualitative** change, a change in kind has been made in school studies. Whereas before the age of sixteen a pupil is taught a whole range of subjects with no objective other than that such studies are intrinsically worthwhile, after that time studies are narrowly focussed on what is to be immediately useful on the labour market. Yet the term 'education' is often used for both processes, as though no change in direction or kind had been made. The issue here is that since something different is patently going on it would seem to be an unnecessary limitation on the way we understand the world, our conceptualization of human experience as this applies to education. The point I wish to make is not merely a verbal one. It is one of meaning and conceptual clarity in which, by the nature of language, more precise terms play an important role in our conceptual development. It is at this point that relevant distinctions in terminology, such as those made by Peters and others between 'training', 'education', 'indoctrination', 'drill', and so on, may be usefully introduced. For they will clarify the teacher's role as educator to a finer degree.

But to return to Warnock's idea that the 'good life' requires for its attainment a life of employment or 'work'. A broad curriculum such as that outlined by Warnock is clearly substantially the same as a curriculum regarded as intrinsically worthwhile. Such a curriculum does not, in any obvious way, 'qualify' students for 'work' in the usual meaning of those terms. An examination of 'the state of the market' would appear to be otiose, for the curriculum is much like the classical '*eng kuklios paideia*' for which a review of the marketability of skills learnt and knowledge obtained is redundant.

One or two general comments on extrinsic aims may not be out of place here. If pre-conceived boundaries are set to knowledge through educational procedures, such as **telling** students to be 'virtuous' at the expense of continuous human enquiries into the nature of 'virtue', or, on the basis of the assumptions that 'work' is desired and is a pre-requisite for 'freedom', the idea that the acquisition of skills and knowledge are specifically a **means** to 'work' rather than making it a first and major goal of education to present to students the view that these skills and this knowledge is what the world is like, then it is not difficult to see the limitations inherently involved in such an instrumental approach to education. The danger is not only that a young person's accumulation of knowledge may be restricted, perhaps to those things highly regarded by small, unsophisticated community, (although that possibility exists) but also that he may come to conceive that knowledge and those skills as something external to his personal development and autonomy; as something one step removed from him as a person. He may wish to reject on rational grounds the view of what is 'moral' that has been presented to him; he may refuse to accept that 'work' is an ingredient of 'the good life'. Further it is possible that being taught how to 'behave well' within a given society the student will yet be ignorant of a vast field of human experience in which 'virtue' (for example) may be seen differently in the light of other rational procedures and argument in certain formalised determinants for what is to count as 'virtue'. (Which is what I mean by a subject's having acquired a life of its own. For a subject, whether morality, mathematics, religion or music, is not generally characterised by whim or arbitrariness nor even the proclamations of a parochial community but is determined largely by universal criteria, without which, of course, it

would be difficult to speak of 'error' or of mistaken interpretations in the various fields of human endeavour.) In ignorance of such agreed procedures or principles, therefore, the student can think only in terms of what 'they', the other members of his own limited society, class as 'good behaviour'. In this sense, being taught to 'behave well' may be seen as a limitation placed upon his personal autonomous development rather than as a substantive expression of universal agreement, for he may later come to see its purely local boundaries rather than the universal life it has acquired. In effect, he can 'behave well' but knows of no reason other than that of his being socially acceptable why he should. According to Warnock it will not be part of his teacher's thinking to approach 'virtue' as an intrinsically worthwhile subject for study as a result of which a student could himself be brought into the universal decision-making process.

A similar situation pertains to the notion of 'work' as an aim extrinsic to education. If a student is taught to aim at 'work' - employment for himself - is it not possible, perhaps inevitable, that he come to view 'work' itself as something outside his personal development? For it may be reasonably argued that a student's **real** objective (i.e. how **he** conceives it) is a happy family life, or money enough to live at leisure on a luxury bachelor's yacht moored in some Aegean island cove. 'Work' with these objectives becomes a boring appendage, another means to a better end, and as far removed as can be from what touches the heart. And certainly subjects on the school curriculum that do not appear to have immediate relevance to 'work' can be ascribed no value whatever. At no point in Warnock's aim 'work' would a student necessarily be brought to see history, mathematics or music as independent forms of human experience valuable in themselves as areas of study and intrinsically worthwhile as components constituting the elements necessary to personal rational and autonomous development. Conceived as intrinsically worthwhile, on the other hand, a knowledge of these areas of human experience will form the substance of the quality of the individual who, in turn, will be capable of making the most of his work, his family or his bachelor's yacht, as **he** conceives it. And it is surely those things, or some modified combination of them, that constitute 'the good life'.

It is questionable, therefore, whether the view that education can have aims extrinsic to it, such as learning to 'behave well' and 'work' can seriously compete either with the conceptual argument elaborated by Peters and others

or with the view that the 'aim' of education is to enable a person, through a knowledge of the full variety of human experience, to determine his own ends. And the latter view is, it might be thought, only yet another way of saying that a person is 'educated'. We might say that to be 'educated' is to be prepared to enter the dialogue of existing human experience, as this comes to us through our knowledge of autonomous disciplines; to be 'educated', one might say, is to have the maturity to join in, to engage in, to **possess** experience, rather than to be possessed by it.

References

- 1 Warnock, Mary, **Schools of Thought** (London: Faber, 1977) p. 159.
- 2 For Wilson's argument see, for e.g. **An Introduction to Moral Education**, by Wilson, J., Williams, N., and Sugarman, B. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), and J. Wilson's **A Teacher's Guide to Moral Education** (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1973), and his **Education in Religion and the Emotions** (London: Heinemann, 1971).
- 3 Warnock, M., (1977) op. cit. p. 132 (original emphasis).
- 4 Ibid., p. 132.
- 5 Ibid., p. 132-133.
- 6 Ibid., pp. 135-136.
- 7 Ibid., p. 136.
- 8 Ibid., p. 141.
- 9 Peters, R. S., **Ethics and Education** (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), p. 34.
- 10 Peters, R. S., (Ed.) **Philosophy of Education**, (OUP, 1973), p. 18.
- 11 Marrou, H. I., op. cit. p. 223.
- 12 Warnock, M., (1977) op. cit. p. 144.
- 13 Ibid., p. 145.
- 14 Ibid., p. 146.
- 15 Ibid., p. 146.
- 16 Ibid., p. 147.
- 17 Ibid., p. 147.
- 18 Ibid., pp. 147-148.

- 19 Ibid., p. 148
- 20 Ibid., p. 149.
- 21 Ibid., p. 150.
- 22 Ibid., p. 144, original emphasis.
- 23 Ibid., p. 144.
- 24 Ibid., p. 145.
- 25 Ibid., p. 147, original emphasis.
- 26 Ibid., p. 155.
- 27 Ibid., p. 151.
- 28 Ibid., p. 152.
- 29 Ibid., p. 147.

Chapter Four

EDUCATION AS A SECOND ORDER PROCESS

So long as there is no other end of study
than to know, the understanding is not
racked and imprisoned, but enjoys freedom.
- Francis Bacon

I The nature of 'second order' in educational theory

If the process of education seen as having aims external to it - the instrumental view - is inadequate in ways already examined, an alternative view may be usefully considered. This I shall term 'second order' and it will involve a quite different way of conceiving the nature and content of education. Among other things it will be necessary to examine the view that the different areas taught within a general, liberal education are to be seen as non-instrumental in character. Each area of man's experience will be taught for its own sake, that is, with a view to the development of the autonomous individual, able to determine for himself the 'use' to which he may put the knowledge and skills imparted to him. This, clearly, is opposed to the view that educators, social pressure groups, industry or politics, should determine (one might say pre-determine) the use to which such knowledge and skills ought to be put. The stance taken up in this thesis makes the assumption that compulsory education exists to promote the development of the autonomous individual; that by means of education our children should be given the means to stand on their own unaided feet. We can do no more than offer, at this point, a brief account of 'autonomy' and its relation to education. And, *en passant*, we may also consider whether the 'autonomous individual' amounts to an 'aim' in education. Firstly, 'autonomy' may be regarded as a stage of development in the life of a person. But the stage of autonomy is not itself the means by which we may reach that stage. We may well insist, as part of his education, that a student should study his history book for an afternoon, but it would seem odd to tell him to go and be autonomous for a couple of hours. It may readily be supposed that autonomy is an objective the teacher aims at in education and provides for in teaching methods, but he does not treat the student at compulsory school level as an autonomous individual within the subject being taught. It would seem that autono-

my in this sense must be construed as an objective **beyond** the process of education. Dearden suggests that autonomy is not another subject, like French, **within**, the curriculum but is, rather, a 'new aim... to develop in children, **over the whole period of their formal schooling**, an important quality of character which can appropriately be called that of "personal autonomy"'. (1) And what Dearden says of 'personal autonomy' can surely be said also of autonomy within the various subjects on the school curriculum. Speaking of the questioning attitude of philosophy, Montefiore says: 'it belongs to this free questioning to put into question even the value of autonomy itself... This is part of what may be seen as one of the ineliminable paradoxes of philosophy; it is why it is always at least potentially subversive'. (2) But if the questioning attitude is one of the 'paradoxes of philosophy' it is also the paradox of an education leading towards 'individual autonomy'. In relation to RE the objective 'autonomy' may lead to an eventual rejection of religion in personal terms, but such a rejection - if it is made 'autonomously' - must (paradoxically) be regarded as **successful** religious education.

However, if the student is brought to the stage of autonomy by the process of education he is then at the very brink of what I shall call 'first order' activities, to enter which specific choices will have to be made and which **presuppose** the educational process. Dearden say:

A person is autonomous to the degree, and it is very much a matter of degree, that what he thinks and does, at least in important areas of his life, are determined by himself. That is to say, it cannot be explained why these are his beliefs and actions without referring to his own activity of mind. This determination of what one is to think and do is made possible by the bringing to bear of relevant considerations in such activities of mind as those of choosing, deciding, deliberating, reflecting, planning and judging. Autonomy is thus possible not only in the philosophically fashionable field of morals, where many writers do indeed speak of rules or a code of one's own, but in any field whatsoever where a person can have his reasons - in political judgments, consumer spending, planning a holiday, choosing or shaping a job, appraising the suggestions or expectations directed towards us by others, forming an aesthetic or scientific opinion, deciding whether we believe in God, determining our stances in relation to the acts of various sorts of authority and so on. (3)

It is not a coincidence that the characteristics of the autonomous person detailed here are not those of a school pupil, but those of a person who has been brought by his education to the 'threshold' of first order activities. This is not to say that a student cannot in fact be autonomous in the way the concept is characterised by Dearden. It is, rather, to make the point that the kind of autonomy to be achieved and the kind of autonomous decisions to be made cannot be formed without a degree and breadth of knowledge and a grasp of the central concepts of human experience involved in the process of a certain form of education.

Although we cannot equate 'autonomy' with 'education' it would appear that the characteristics of the autonomous person described by Dearden are generally acceptable values in an adult and that such values are promoted to the greatest extent by the process of a liberal education; that the **conditions** for the autonomy of the individual lie largely in that process. But the form or nature of that educational process is best seen, as I shall attempt to show, as a second order process, impartially advanced on the part of the teacher and untrammelled by the snares of close engagement on the part of the student.

Like philosophy, education appears to spring from an interest in and systematization of human experience. In virtue of these elements one may claim of education that it is intended to act as a foundation for developing the minds of the next generation in its understanding of all forms of experience. It may be said that no other form of experience in the life of the individual deliberately sets out to make known and enlighten all other forms of experience: only education does that. In this way education would seem to be different **in kind** from the actual practice of those experiences it sets out to explain in a systematic way. This particular characteristic appears to be constitutive of its nature. It is worth considering the possibility that if compulsory schooling were not of this kind then one might think that society would quickly invent a system very much like it. It would appear to follow that education conceived in this way cannot be unicellular. How odd it would seem for education to involve the study of carpentry or literature and nothing else. It would be odd because we have come to associate education with a breadth of study in human experience, which allows

the student to see the inter-related nature of experience such that a study of Carpentry or literature alone could not provide.

We shall, therefore, consider the view that education is a different sort of experience from others in that education is a preparation **for** experiences rather than an engagement **in** experience; that this is a more adequate account of the introduction of young people into adult society while, at the same time, developing individual autonomy and the rational mind. We may take it that the development of the rational mind and the autonomy of the individual are qualities that society does, in fact, desire; and that the most effective way to give the next generation the ability to exercise autonomy is by means of an education characterised as a second order process.

I wish to argue that central to this process education sets out to promote such general knowledge in terms of the **conceptual** nature of that knowledge. This might be called its **foundational** character, whose function is to expose the structure of all forms of experience. It is the purpose of this chapter to show what might be meant by this. Put another way, I shall suggest that the aim of education is to encapsulate experience in symbolic forms enabling students the better to focus upon and understand experience. 'One can understand nothing of a subject' says Hamlyn 'unless one has the concepts in which that understanding is to be expressed. Hence, the process of learning a subject goes hand in hand with the process of acquiring the relevant concepts, the concepts in terms of which the subject-matter and its principles are to be formulated'. (4) None of this is to deny that there may be different ways in which a knowledge of experience in terms of concepts may be taught in the educational process; but that is a problem for methodology, not philosophy. And what I have to say negates nothing of what is said by Hamlyn about 'the delicate balance between principles and cases ... between an understanding of principles in general terms and an understanding of their relevance to particular cases'. (5)

In using the term 'second order' I raise the question: Isn't this a term we use of the activity of philosophy? Of course there is a connection and I make the comparison advisedly. The second order nature of philosophy consists in philosophy's examination of established forms of experience. With mathematics established, philosophy reflects upon the nature of mathematics; given history, philosophy reflects upon the nature of historical thinking, and so on. In this sense it is said that philosophy is a 'reflective' activity. But is a reflective, second order activity always 'philosophy'? Hirst and Peters seem sure that a reflective activity is not always philosophy: 'A teacher, for instance, can reflect about what prompts people to paint pictures.' This, they say, is a reflective activity but not a philosophical activity. It is a problem within the first order activity of psychology. (6) But what, then, might be said about the questions: What was the relationship between Charles the First and the Long Parliament? Or, How could it be said that the disciples thought of Jesus as the Messiah? Could it not be cogently argued that these are second order questions in that they deal with reflective thought concerning concepts not only in history and religion but also in the established areas of psychology, politics, biblical exegesis and so on, and could be interpreted as philosophical problems? Then what do we make of the summary of the nature of philosophy by Hirst and Peters: 'Philosophy, in brief, is concerned with questions about the grounds of knowledge, belief, actions and activities.'? (7) After all, education, too, is concerned to give good reasons for supposing that certain things are known of the world; and is concerned to distinguish one area of that knowledge from another. Also, like philosophy, education, as Scheffler reminds us 'fosters criticism' of knowledge, 'striving for a systematic and penetrating comprehension of' man's environment. (8) It is a nice point as to where a study of, say, history ends and philosophy begins. It is also the case, of course, that education, involving a wide range of activities as it does, includes activities that are neither philosophical nor reflective or second order, such as the passing on of information; teaching the multiplication tables by rote; practising the high-jump and so on. Like the teaching of reading and writing these activities may help enormously to facilitate the formation of concepts, but as isolated activities they do not provide the kind of inter-relatedness of man's experience characteristic of conceptual knowledge and the wider enterprise of education construed as an introduction to all forms of human experience. Such activities are involved in the process of education but do not constitute a distinguishing

feature of education. For example, when my young daughter comes home with the exciting news that she has read her first story book and teacher says she can now move on to 'book two', I may rejoice in her mastery of a difficult skill, but I shall not consider such specific mechanical mastery as **characteristic** of her education but as only one of a number of skills that enable her to begin or continue the education. Her education begins, or continues, with her grasp of what it means to achieve X; her capacity to conceptualize what, for example, an ability to read means to her as an individual. I shall be aware that such conceptualization of experience will, normally, grow with her schooling, with her acquisition of further knowledge; and I shall be very much aware that her 'schooling', involving as it will the acquisition of more skills and information about the world, is not all **necessarily** related to her acquisition of such conceptual understanding.

Whatever may be said about the second order nature of philosophy, my claim that education, in the structured schooling situation, is a second order form of experience is based upon the thinking that the process of education is best characterised by teaching with the intention of getting students to come to know and understand a variety of experiences by means of the conceptual structure believed to underly those experiences. Further, that **coming to know and understand these concepts is not necessarily to engage in the experiences themselves**. My argument attempts to show that, while some form of engagement is, in fact, practised in schools, this engagement is only a means to end: that 'end' or 'objective' is a knowledge of certain accepted forms of experience. It is of importance to remember that throughout history education is characterised by students' studying phenomena in a reflective manner. The practice of what a student is learning - whether oratory with Quintilian or the dissection of a frog with a biology teacher - is an adjunct to the study of experience. That this has not been the case with the guilds and apprenticeships of, for example, the Middle Ages, where the objective was physical skill and not reflection on the process of that skill, serves only to highlight the traditional distinction between education and the acquisition of a trade or profession. If it be now considered by some that these two traditions should be merged and that education should now combine the traditional approach of the study of phenomena with training specifically oriented towards a trade or profession (or even a certain form of 'way of life', a form of socialization) then it may be reasonable supposed that rational argument will be produced to support this view. But we have seen in

Mary Warnock's ideas some of the difficulties that are to be encountered there.

I suggest, therefore, that education is a 'concept grasping' process, to be distinguished qualitatively from any practical work that may be involved in pedagogical methods. If a student is not brought to see what these concepts are, what they mean, how they are distinctive of a given area of experience, and so on, he will lack a knowledge and understanding of experience in all but the vaguest of ways. To teach students more than the central concepts of the various forms of experience - for example, to teach students special skills in essay-writing, to teach them to play a musical instrument, archaeological digging, computer programming, and so on - is all grist to the mill, time and resources permitting. Not only will this further practice be in addition to other school work such as an appreciation and understanding of literature, music, mathematics and so on, it will also have the function of deepening, imparting more meaning to, making more precise, strengthening, the learning of those concepts which comprise our understanding of experience. To teach students more than the central concepts (whatever they maybe thought to be) of a given form of experience is to add important icing to the educational cake. To teach less than the central concepts of the particular items we may be currently teaching is not merely to give students no cake at all; it is to get them to mistake the icing for the cake. The difference between necessary and peripheral concepts within a structured framework of a given curriculum subject will emerge in the following chapters.

Since coming to understand the concepts involved in the nature of experience is not possible without the activity of reflection, some further comments on 'reflection' and its relation to the 'second order' nature of education may be appropriate here. If 'second order' characterises the nature of education, 'reflection' is the activity that produces and develops that nature. The second order nature of philosophy of mathematics is demonstrated by the activity of reflection upon mathematics. The two notions are not identical. As Hirst and Peters point out, 'reflection' is not exclusively a philosophical activity. While we may reflect without philosophizing, we cannot philosophize without reflecting. The same relationship appears to hold for education as well. We may reflect upon something without engaging in education, but we cannot engage in education without reflection. The particular point I am defending here is that a student in school may participate in many different activities - he may learn to read,

to work out an equation, to dismantle an engine or to draw - but unless he reflects upon these activities in a distinctive way he is not being educated. What is this distinctive form of reflection in education? It appears to comprise the following. A student is encountering a new experience. He sees the world for the first time in many different ways. How is he to organize the experience? How to distinguish it from others? To tell the student that 1, 2, 3 etc., is a series of numbers is to give him information. If the student copies the series of numbers exactly we may say that the teacher has passed on information. But can the student continue a series of numbers **without** copying? has he grasped the concept 'number' and the notion of following a rule in arithmetic? Similarly if the teacher recounts certain historical episodes then the student may be said to have a certain form of information. But can the student now distinguish between 'facts' and an historical presentation or interpretation of those facts? Now, I would argue that what transforms these various situations from being merely informative sessions into forms of educational practice is the student's ability to incorporate such information and skills into the concepts that govern the discipline being taught. Information makes educational sense only when it is seen as part of a pattern, a conceptual structure, and integration is achieved by the activity of reflecting upon the information given. (Perhaps the most important task of the teacher is to make sure that the conceptual structure into which new information is placed is the **correct** pattern.) Mere 'information-gathering' (whether of mental or motor skills) is a **caricature** of education. Hence Whitehead's censure 'A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth.' (9) The student being successfully **educated**, on the other hand, will grasp what it means to follow a rule and will be able by means of reflection to interpret, to judge correctly, material that is **not** presented by a teacher. Reflection upon experience, therefore, rather than practice or the acquisition of information allows us to speak of education as being characterised by its second order nature.

What do I mean by 'form of experience '? A person's life consists of many different experiences. In any given day, year or lifetime these experiences may be seen to overlap; most often they are inter-connected to make up to the warp and woof of life. Many experiences can be distinguished and given distinctive characteristics. Although in certain cases it may not be possible to show precise boundaries for any but the simplest experience, I think it may be said that the attempt to make distinctions between experiences, and to categorise

them, is a pre-requisite of the development of human knowledge. The point need not be elaborated. I simply use 'form of experience' as a generic term to denote distinguishable human experiences.

There are, then, many different forms of experience. I shall pick out a number of them sufficient to illustrate the sort of distinctions that are in fact made and, more importantly, to illustrate that while education is itself a form of experience it is different from most other forms of experience in that it is a second order form of experience. Education differs from philosophy not necessarily in virtue of its second order nature but in certain other respects which I have indicated but which do not affect the present argument. Education's second order nature, then consists in teaching students with the intention that they shall come to know and understand the concepts thought to be central to certain distinctive experiences; that this process is not itself part of those experiences; that education, in this sense, is a second order, reflective process.

II First order forms of experience contrasted with education

Forms of experience may be distinguished from one another. Riding a horse is different from driving a bus; being a mathematician is different from being a psychologist; being an office-clerk is different from being a bricklayer or painter; being an archaeologist is different from being a priest; all of them are different from practising medicine. These are first order experiences in that, in engaging in them we are not engaged in reflecting about them. They may therefore be distinguished from the process of education, for education is precisely the activity in which we do engage in reflecting on the other forms of experience.

A person working within a first order experience such as bricklayer, lawyer or office-clerk who continues with his education is normally considered to be doing so in addition to his daily work. We might say of the professional historian and the professor of physics in a university department that they are 'educated' but not that they are continuing their education, although, like the bricklayer, they might be doing that in addition to their professional work. One might reasonably suppose that they already know the concepts central to their work - they have 'been educated'. Indeed, we would not normally confuse 'education' with first order forms of experience. It is true that a chemist in his laboratory is 'learning' something; presumably he intends to learn something; but few would want to say that **thereby** he is undergoing a process of education. They would say, rather,

he is doing research, diagnosing a virus or making up a new kind of foot-powder. The bus driver, in the course of his duties, may learn a great deal of human psychology but we would not normally say, because of that, that he is being educated - except perhaps in an extended sense, as when we say of a well-behaved person 'he's had a good education'. The historian writing his third book on the legislation of Imperial Rome is not, by this fact, said to be undergoing a process of education. A case has been argued, by Professor Peters, for the possibility of a person's being educated without his being conscious of it. But isn't it somewhat odd to speak of unconscious reflection on matters of experience?

But confusion can arise if a teacher believes he has a group of chemists when what he has in fact is a group of students who are studying the kind of work a chemist does, and who forgets that his intention is to get them to learn chemistry and not 'how to be a chemist'. If the teacher thinks he has a group of bus drivers rather than students studying social psychology there will be confusion. When a history teacher takes a first year secondary school group for their first lesson and tells them about transport in the stone-age, does this mean he is talking to historians? Being a chemist, a bus driver or a historian is not the same kind of thing as being a student of these experiences. What the student (in or out of school) is doing (or at least what the teacher intends him to be doing - we are not especially concerned with the achievement sense here) is learning the techniques, understanding the concepts, coming to grips with the principles involved in the work of **all** chemists, all bus drivers and all historians. Any practical work (in or outside the school) involved in coming to an understanding of these first order experiences is a simulated first order experience; if the 'outside visit' or 'practical work' is part and parcel of the educational process then by definition it cannot be the first order experience itself. An admirable example of what appears to be the two forms of experience being practised side by side is to be found in Thomas Hardy's **Tess of the D'Urbervilles**. Of Angel Clare Hardy says: 'It was true that he was at present out of his class. But she knew that was only because, like Peter the Great in a shipwright's yard, **he was studying** what he wanted to know. He did not milk cows because he was obliged to milk cows, **but because he was learning** how to be a rich and prosperous dairyman, landowner, agriculturist and breeder of cattle.' (10) We can say that although Angel Clare appeared to be working within a first order activity like the others (milking cows), he was actually undergoing the second order experience of education. For his aim was quite different: 'He was studying' says

Hardy. We may safely assume that whereas Angel Clare was reflecting on the business of farming the other milkers were not. As Oakeshott has put it, the student being educated 'is a **postulant** to a human condition'. (11) However, since simulated activity is one of the best teaching methods it is understandable that some people come to think that it is the experience or activity that is the objective rather than the understanding of the concepts and being able to relate them to other fields of first order experience which will, together, form the notion of what may be commonly understood as the 'educated person'. But methods of teaching and learning are part of the process of education within the compulsory schooling situation, not part of the first order experience itself. Hence, the student who simulates some of the activities of a chemist in the school laboratory is not in fact a chemist and cannot be regarded as working within a first order activity.

Hirst says: 'Science teachers do not simply mouth the scientific statements they wish their pupils to understand. They are concerned with elucidating how scientists come to say what they do and why'. (12) The distinction may be made: being 'concerned with elucidating how scientists come to say what they do and why' is **not** science (a first order activity), it is to teach (a second order activity) what science is; an educational activity. Renford Bambrough expresses the nub of the matter in a slightly different context when he said 'in describing science one is not doing science, in describing mathematics one is not doing mathematics...' (13) There is an old film with Spencer Tracy playing the part of Jekyll and Hyde. When Jekyll mixed his liquids, in the laboratory, he was not reflecting about 'chemistry', or coming to grips with the concepts of chemical change in general. He was thinking about Hyde. The school student who seems to be mixing chemicals in exactly the same way as Jekyll is learning chemical facts already known to all chemists; he is, by learning these facts, reflecting on them, trying to come to grips with the concepts of chemistry; he is reflecting only on the nature of chemistry and the concepts of scientific work, not something beyond this. As Scheffler points out 'The teacher of science is, of course, also a practitioner, but his practice is of a critically different sort from that of the scientist himself. He needs to have a conception of the field of science as a whole, of its aims, methods, and standards; he needs to have principles for selecting materials and experiences suitable for inducting novices into the field, and he needs to be able to communicate both with novices and with scientific sophisticates. Whereas the particular scientific investigator need have no

overall conception of science but requires only sophistication in his special subject matter, the science teacher's subject matter embraces scientific thought itself; his professional purpose, that is to say, can be articulated only in terms of some inclusive conception of scientific activity which it is his object to foster... The teacher requires, in other words, a general conceptual grasp of science and a capacity to formulate and explain its workings to the outsider... The scope of this requirement is, I suggest, virtually indistinguishable from that of the philosophy of science. No matter what additional resources the teacher may draw on, he needs at least to assume the standpoint of philosophy in performing his work'. (14) We may say *mutatis mutandis* that this is also the stance of the student in a general education; the student's work *qua* student is also 'of a critically different sort from that of the scientist himself'. Scheffler goes on 'If philosophy of science is a second-order reflective approach to scientific inquiry, science teaching also incorporates such a second-order reflective approach.' (15) 'The educator, like the philosopher, seeks a general account of those fields represented by teaching subjects, that he requires some reflective grasp of the "forms of thought" they might be said to embody... The philosopher (Scheffler is here contrasting the philosophers's attitude with the scientist's), on the other hand, takes these very mental habits (of the scientist) as his object, rather than the scientific problems to which they are, or may be, applied. His task, in short, is to articulate and analyze the forms themselves and to try to understand their point. He wants to achieve such comprehensive analytical understanding not for some ulterior practical motive, but for its own sake, although he does not, of course, deny that understanding may affect practice.' (16)

This is not to deny, of course, that there can be 'learning by experience', for that is precisely what the teacher intends - **learning** by means of an experience; for the 'learning' is the objective, not the 'experience'. But 'learning' alone is not enough; one can learn a skill, and remain uneducated; one can learn facts, and remain uneducated; one can gather information, and remain uneducated. The grasp of concepts within the various forms of knowledge requires reflection upon those skills, facts and information, and it is this characteristic which marks education off from a first order experience. Reflection upon the nature of bus driving is not itself to drive a bus, but though driving a bus will probably help towards an understanding of the activity. (17) Reflecting on the nature of history, that is to say, coming to understand what an historian is doing; looking at examples of his work, analysing it, and so on, is not itself

to do history. An historian, **qua** historian, does not reflect on the nature of the work of an historian. (If and when he does so he is probably working in the philosophy of history.) On a British Broadcasting Corporation television documentary in 1978, Henry Moore, the sculptor, said that if he were an educationalist he would want students to spend more time on drawing in art, not because he wished students to become artists but because observation necessary in drawing gave them a better understanding of things around them. Moore here sees that what is of central importance in education is not that a student should learn to **be** an artist (or, he might say, anything else), a first order activity, but that he should come to understand what the world is like. This is why I describe certain activities as 'simulated' first order experiences. 'Learning by experience' is simply one of the (many) ways by which we may come to know and understand something. (18)

The contrast between a first order form of experience and education may also be seen, as I have previously hinted, in terms of 'aims', 'objectives', of 'intention'. For example, the objective of the mathematician is to get his sums right; the objective of the historian is to reach a coherent historical interpretation. But the objective of a **study** of mathematics or history is to come to know and understand the **nature** of mathematics or history. What was called the 'new maths' in the 1960's emphasized precisely this point. As Loukes says 'All may learn a few mathematical tricks, but only a few learn to think mathematically'. (19) To get one's sums right or to reach a coherent historical interpretation is not the goal of the student; it is a **means** to that possibility, not an end in itself. There is a logical distance between working out a sum in order to get the correct answer and working out a sum in order to know what it means to work out a sum. Someone might ask: What would it be like for a student to 'work out a sum' in religion? Would the student have to pray, for example? The analogy need not be like this because it does not seem to be necessary for the means by which we come to know one form of experience to conform so closely to the means by which we come to know another. Would a student have to paint a picture or compose a sonata in order to come to know and understand what art or music is? (20) 'Cashing in' a concept in a one to one relationship seems to be a doubtful procedure if applied indiscriminately. A precise description of the relationship will surely depend upon the form of experience studied and on the individual student's stage of conceptual development. Does any precise meaning attach to 'cashing in' a concept? The phrase 'to cash in' is, of course, an analogy. The 'chips' are plastic; we exchange them for 'real' money. I think

the analogy cannot be pressed too far. While there is a precise one to one relationship between 'chips' and 'money', there cannot be, in the nature of things, a precise one to one relationship between a concept we are teaching in the classroom and the 'reality' of that concept in the world. It seems to me that, most often, the relationship is rather more tenuous, developmental and associable rather than rigid and static. How would a West European schoolboy who never travels 'cash in' the concepts 'bushman', 'cyclone' or 'Socrates'? Yet I suggest that, in the education process, he does cash in these and other concepts, and that he can cash them in through his own experience (sight, sounds and so on) - though he never sees any of them directly. To suppose otherwise would be to hold that education is unattainable. Relating 'particular cases' to 'principles' (as Hamly expresses it) allows a certain flexibility we cannot reasonably deny. The **delicacy** of the 'balance between principles and cases' is the issue here. (21) But nothing in this discussion annuls the notion of the difference in kind between, for example, the historian's coherent interpretation and the student's study of how the historian goes about his work. Their objectives remain logically dissimilar. A major distinction may be seen, therefore, in the criterion of 'objective'. An activity is invariably made intelligible by the objective held for it. In religious rites 'sacrifice' becomes mere pointless slaughter without a clear religious objective. One simply cannot tell whether 'getting one's sums right' or 'trying to work out a coherent historical interpretation' are educational or not by just looking at the activities themselves. We may have to ask: What is the teacher's objective? And if the answer is 'to get one's sums right' or 'to reach a coherent historical interpretation' then we may be sure that the teacher has confused the objective of the mathematician and historian with that of the educator.

III Education as a preparation for first order experiences

Characterised as a second order form of experience education is, so to speak, one step removed from other forms of experience. There is a logical gap between a first order experience and 'education' defined as a second order experience. As a matter of contingent fact the distinction is not as unrealistic as it seems because, while there is a conceptual difference there is considerable **de facto** interaction. Education, in the structured, formal sense is, and is intended to be, a preparation for other forms of experience. To be more precise, it is

intended to be a preparation for all other forms of experience; the use of the universal 'all' is significant and is reflected in the common educational slogan 'education is for the whole man'. To suppose that education is and ought to be limited to a preparation for some, but not other, forms of experience would mean narrowing the scope of rational inquiry and the training of the inquiring mind. Thus the idea of students' being brought to the **threshold** of first order activities may not be an inaccurate way of describing the educational process. The threshold is also the objective of education since, as a second order form of experience and different in kind from first order forms of experience, it cannot have an objective of a logically disparate kind. It is, I think, at this point that Scheffler is led to disagree with Ryle (at least on the matter of moral norms but in such a way as to affect the crucial issue with regard to how we construe the concept of education) who thought of 'teaching', within the concept of education, as the passing on of 'skills'.

Scheffler says, against Ryle 'What is at issue is, thus, it seems to me, not whether inculcation of norms shall take place, but rather what norms shall be inculcated and in what manner, whether, e.g. our norms shall be restrictive or generous, authoritarian or democratic, whether they shall be dogmatically instilled by our educational institutions or whether they shall be taught, - explained and submitted to the independent judgment of pupils'. (22) Scheffler therefore makes the point that the 'inculcation' of norms shall take place, his main argument being 'The inculcation of habits, norms, and propensities pervades all known educational practice, and such practice is not therefore merely a matter of skills'. (23) Of course Scheffler has already decided that 'our educational aim is, in fact, not merely to teach pupils **how** to be good citizens but, in particular, to **be** good citizens, not merely **how** to go about voting, but **to** vote'. (24) He thereby refutes Ryle's idea of education as the acquisition of skills (which would enable a student to choose whether certain norms are to be accepted or rejected) and replaces it with the idea of making the teacher directly responsible both for what norms shall be inculcated and the manner of inculcation. Scheffler is not merely saying that teachers cannot avoid inculcation of norms (a manifest truth) but that they **ought** to inculcate specific norms. To give pupils the skills with which to choose, says Scheffler, is not enough. However, the fact that such 'propensities pervades all known educational practice' is not an argument for saying either that they **ought** to, or that they ought to be this rather than that. And the point that teachers ought to inculcate moral norms (however

'enlightened' the method may be) is a tough and unsolved value problem. Are we sure, for example (as Scheffler asserts) that we are 'concerned that (pupils) acquire democratic habits'? The argument for giving the skills of discrimination to pupils, for bringing them to the **threshold**, is one which gives priority to the freedom of choice within first order forms of experience. It applies as much to other first order forms of experience as it does to moral norms. This, I think, is an eminently reasonable position. But there is a logical point to be made which gives more power to Ryle than to Scheffler on this issue. It is that, on the view of education as a second order activity, the teacher may **only** aim at getting students to understand (by reflecting upon etc.) the concepts of 'being a voter', 'being democratic' and so on; this is because 'being democratic' etc., is a first order form of experience and by definition is not part of education.

IV The second order nature of religious education

The special problem that confronts religious education is that 'teaching religion' is thought by many to be the same as teaching students to be religious. But that this is a confusion is now, perhaps clear in that, if my view is correct, 'teaching religion' (or, RE) is a second order activity, whereas 'being religious' (like 'being a priest') is a first order form of experience. 'Being religious', or even 'being taught to be religious' (which has an objective **beyond** the 'threshold') logically cannot be a second order activity because 'teaching' within the educational process means that the teacher shall have the intention of bringing about the learning of the concepts of religion and the religious life rather than 'being religious'. And to recognize the experience, to understand the concepts, involved in becoming a chemist or historian or, in this case, a 'religious person' is not itself to be or become a chemist, historian or religious person. It seems clear to me that in order for one to be or become a chemist, historian or religious person, rather more specific training together with some kind of commitment or 'choice' to go beyond the threshold is required; or, in the case of the religious person, one might say personal religious experiences are required. But neither the specific training of the chemist nor the provision of specific religious experiences seem to be a requirement of, or even necessary to, the educational process which is, rather, intended to bring to students an understanding of the chemist's work and the religious person's life. The more precise distinction between 'education' and 'training' is the subject for a somewhat different, though related, discussion. Sufficient to say here that even

if we were to reduce 'education' to 'training' there would still be, perhaps, a conceptual difference between 'education/training' on the one hand, and the first order experience of the 'educated/trained' person on the other. It would depend on how we defined 'training' of course.

What is necessary to the educational enterprise and what marks it off as essentially different from other experiences is the learning outcome in terms of 'knowledge and understanding' brought about by reflecting upon experiences; and this is a second order process quite the opposite of instrumentalism in which knowledge and understanding are a means to some further end, and whose 'end', either in 'values' or 'work', determines the content of a curriculum in specific and logically constricting ways. It is not at all incongruous to describe as musically educated a person who can play no instrument and does not sing. It seems to me that to suppose otherwise, that is, to suppose that education is a first order experience in which the student must be regarded as a budding artist, mathematician, historian, scientist, writer or 'religious person' - and these all at once if we are talking about a 'liberal' education - is to recognize that education has most often failed. The process of education is the condition of 'becoming' rather than 'being' or 'doing' anything of the first order kind. Which is why, presumably, Oakeshott describes education as a process of 'becoming human'.

It might be argued that in the case of music, mathematics, literature, art and so on, a pupil can (and does) 'do' them but, perhaps, 'not very well'. Is it appropriate to say this of religion? Can we say 'He believes in God - but not very well'? No. But to 'believe in' God equals, in the mathematics form of experience, to 'be' a mathematician - but he is surely not that either. A 'believer' and a 'mathematician' are both **beyond** the threshold of education. In the field of practical activity it is not even always necessary or appropriate for students to learn by **doing**. (For example, touching a flame to find it hot; sex and so on.) We are here in the realms of different methods of learning different concepts. It may be appropriate to learn mathematics or cooking by utilizing certain forms of practical work; but it is not necessarily appropriate to come to an understanding of literature by writing literature; nor in coming to recognize masterwork in painting is it necessary to paint or 'be a painter'. Similarly in religion one does not have to be religious in order to understand religion. To think that one must be religious in order to understand religion is simply to misunderstand the nature of reality in which many forms of experience are under-

stood but which do not require actual participation for that to be brought about. 'To suppose... that the character of religion is a question upon which a religious man, as such, is specially qualified to advise us, would involve (to say the least) unwarranted assumptions.' (25) And the tests for what has come to be known by a student will vary also. It may be appropriate in mathematics for students to work out equations to indicate a grasp of principles, but it is not appropriate in religion to test a student's understanding by requiring him to become 'religious' for half-an-hour. To test whether a student has come to understand the appropriate religious concepts he may be required, rather, to give a written or oral account of, for example, the concept of transcendence, or the Christian concept of sin. (One surely does not have to sin to be able to know what sin is.) The tests in different forms of knowledge will therefore differ according to the form.

But however useful it may be to test a student in order to find out his level of achievement it might be as well to remind ourselves that practical demonstration of what a pupil purportedly knows, or skills he is able to perform, are not part of an educational process. Tests and examinations assess what is supposed to have been **achieved** by education; they are not of themselves educative. School activities are aimed at producing the rational person, and this applies to teaching the high jump as much as to the teaching of history. To suppose otherwise is, at best, to regard education as the imparting of skills for the purpose of their particular use. We have seen some of the problems posed by Mary Warnock's instrumentalism. Such activities are already catered for in various training programmes, apprenticeships and, in the case of religion, in the church or home. Educational activities, on the other hand, are not exhausted at the point where a particular skill or item of knowledge has been acquired. We have already seen how the acquisition of skills and information do not of themselves constitute an educational process.

Paul Hirst has commented on what cannot be taught, as part of public education, in RE. 'What cannot be part of education, however, would be seeking to develop, say, a disposition to worship in that faith, or certain emotions of love of God, when that very disposition, or these emotions, are only a justifiable development if the religion is accepted by the individual. That acceptance I have argued is a personal, private judgment which education, committed to reason alone as it is, has no right to foreclose.' (26) Now, if I understand this properly, what Hirst objects to here is the first order experience 'being religious' and,

if my analysis be accepted, there is a **logical** reason for not being able to teach the sort of 'disposition' Hirst mentions. It is simply that the teaching of such disposition is not an educational activity, for it seeks more than a knowledge of (and commitment to a knowledge of) what is the case. It seeks, rather, to engage in a first order activity; an activity whose objective is the practice of, rather than an understanding of, the subject matter. It cannot be true to say, therefore, that RE is not possible. (27) Nor can it be said that religious **beliefs** cannot be taught in public education, as Hirst seems sometimes to argue. Religious beliefs are no less susceptible to educational treatment than beliefs in music, art, historical explanation or literature. The crucial point is that teachers cannot (logically) teach students 'to believe' in matters which are not susceptible to the rational teaching-learning process characterised as a second order activity. It is perfectly possible (i.e. logically and educationally possible) to teach the belief that 'Jesus was the son of God' as long as it is understood that the elements involved in the teaching constitute a rational appraisal of the relevant concepts, the objective of which is the understanding (learning) of the beliefs. Indeed, I would argue that this is precisely the kind of subject-matter that ought (logically) to be taught in religious education; for example (in Christianity) 'Jesus as son of God'; 'sin'; 'redemption'; 'baptism' and so on, rather than the historical, psychological, moral and sociological 'connections' with religious belief that are more often taught, and which too often masquerade as 'religious education'. Neither student nor teacher need have a committed religious disposition towards the concepts since 'to be committed' in this way would be to cross the 'threshold' into a first order experience. To teach the belief that 'Jesus was the son of God' is no different in educational terms from teaching the sociological thesis that 'people have a right to work'. Whether the student comes to have the believer's disposition concerning either statement is not the concern of the teacher **qua** educator. His concern is that the student shall come to understand the beliefs and the concepts involved. There is a world of difference between teaching the belief that Jesus was the son of God, and, teaching students to have the attitude of the believer who holds that Jesus was the son of God. The first is an educational enterprise; the second is not.

The fact that there is a distinction between the existential nature of human knowledge and an 'appreciation' of that knowledge (a reflective experience) - between being religious, being a writer, being a musician or painter, on the one hand, and attempting to grasp the distinctive, conceptual nature of these

areas on the other, seems hardly deniable. And it seems inevitable that compulsory state education should be characterised by the latter while the former may be left to specific training institutions, or, in the case of religion, to the individual's private interpretation of experience which, by definition, is not itself part of the educational enterprise.

V Professional and private behaviour in the teaching of religion

I argue that no teacher, any more than his pupil, needs to be religiously committed to the religious life in virtue of the religious concepts he teaches. This means that a teacher of religion does not have to be a 'believer' in the religious sense (any more than a teacher of Marxism or of black magic has to be a Marxist or a magician). It becomes a matter of educational indifference as to whether the teacher (or pupil) is or is not religiously committed.

Since it seems to be a fact that teachers of religion (like other teachers) influences their students by their general behaviour and by their personal attitudes and opinions as well as by their more 'neutral' presentation of the work in hand, the question arises: How should we regard such personal influence? More specifically, do we wish to say that such personal influence and general behaviour belong to the concept of education necessarily? Or, on the other hand, are such personal influence to be regarded as unavoidable aspects of human nature but that they are not, as far as possible, to be built into the concept of education as intentional, deliberate components?

It seems to me that if we were to regard such personal influences as a necessary and intentional part of the educational process we should then be subscribing to the idea (at least in RE) that a knowledge of religion on the part of the student is to be **caught** rather than (or, as well as) taught. That is to say, a teacher's public (as well as private) behaviour would be a necessary aspect of education. This would be to deny the original claim that I made, to the effect that the process of education is centrally involved in a study of, not an engagement in, human experience, expressed in the teaching of those concepts thought to be necessary to an understanding of the experience. What would be the implications of accepting the principle that a teacher's general (public and private) behaviour is, in fact, built into the notion of what it is to educate? The issue

is significant in this context because 'teaching by example' would constitute some form of first order experience. It would involve an extension of the concept of education (as I have so far characterised it) to include the public and private behaviour of the teacher.

In such circumstances we could expect one of two things. Either the student will observe, reflect upon and learn something from the teacher's behaviour and this will be deliberately and intentionally encouraged and controlled by the teacher, like other forms of teaching; or, the student will absorb the experience in a non-reflective manner and will mirror the teacher's behaviour (or not) with no intentional direction by the teacher. His inclination and feelings will determine how the student is to behave. Clearly the second of these alternatives cannot be condoned, on the grounds (at least) that a society simply does not establish an expensive system of education where what is learned is learned by accident, by the caprice of 'feeling' or by emotionally determined 'inclinations'. But the first alternative, that the student shall observe and be taught to observe critically the teacher's behaviour, seems equally unacceptable on the grounds already examined. This is not to claim that the teacher can be 'neutral' in the sense that a teacher must be at pains to hide his feelings and personal opinions, of course. One sympathises with a view of Mary Warnock: 'the spectacle of someone's remaining neutral in a highly charged dispute about a subject that affects every one is like a nightmare'; it is, she says, 'the nightmare of the knitters at the guillotine'. (28) It is, rather, to claim that the teacher *qua* educator should not import his personal life into his professional business *as though it were a logically necessary element in his profession*.

If the view I put forward is accepted then certain current trends in schooling, within RE, must be rejected. The teacher can, for example, no longer be seen as a Grand Social Worker, or Purveyor of Good Moral Advice. Such aspects of sociology and psychology the teacher has learned as part of his professional training will be seen for what they are: as means to bring about knowledge and understanding in the student successfully, not as a reason for converting the student to current norms of behaviour and conformity to existing social patterns.

There are a number of other elements in contemporary RE that may be usefully examined in the light of the second order nature of the educational process. I find it appropriate to include a discussion of these elements in chapter

eight at the point where the content of religious knowledge in the classroom is discussed.

Having argued that it is a knowledge of religion that is the precise concern of the teacher, rather than the producing of a religious person, it would seem appropriate to examine what that knowledge might be. However, in recent years an issue which has assumed some significance has been raised concerning the difficulties of teaching religion in secular societies. In an attempt to resolve the differences of opinion between what has been called the 'confessional' approach and the non confessional approach in RE it has been, and still is, considered that a satisfactory compromise can be made by distinguishing between 'teaching religion' and 'teaching about religion'. Before looking at the question of what religious knowledge might be, therefore, I shall first consider whether such a distinction has point. It appears in the form of the question: Is religious **education** possible?

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- 13 In a lecture given at Jesus College, Cambridge, September 1971.
- 14 Scheffler, I., (1973) op. cit., pp. 35-36.
- 15 Ibid., p. 36.
- 16 Ibid., p. 37.
- 17 Oakeshott shrewdly, although somewhat elusively, comments: 'The distinction between a driver and a learner-driver is not insignificant.' ('Learning and teaching' in Peters, R. S., (Ed.) (1967), op. cit., p. 156.

- 18 I take 'understanding' to mean the intellectual grasp of conceptual schemata belonging to the various forms of knowledge. In broader educational terms 'having an understanding' will also involve not only a grasp of the discrete 'forms of knowledge' (analysed by Hirst and discussed in later chapters) but also an ability to see the whole field of present human knowledge in terms of the discrete forms, so that the wholeness or inter-relatedness of man's knowledge can be identified. Peters expresses it thus: 'A man is not educated if he is merely well informed, even though he may have a passion for accuracy and an avid curiosity. He must also have some grasp of underlying principles... Such an understanding of principles does not depend upon the accumulation of extra items of knowledge. Rather it requires reflection on what is already known so that a principle can be found to illuminate the facts.' (*Ethics and Education*, 1966, op. cit., p. 83.)
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- 27 See, for example, Marples, R., (1978) 'Is religious education possible?' in *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, vol. 12, in which Marples argues that 'R.E. is not possible' because religion cannot be taught with 'full understanding' without at the same time indoctrinating pupils. In arguing that religious education is possible, W.D. Hudson, in his article 'Is religious education possible?' in Langford, G., and O'Connor, D. J., (Eds.) (1973) op. cit., tends to

incite the spectre of indoctrination into malevolent activity when he speaks of pupils' being 'initiated into religious belief' and 'devotion.' More will be said about this in the next chapter.

28 Warnock, M., **Schools of Thought**, (1977) op. cit.

Chapter Five

IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POSSIBLE?

I Teaching 'about' religion

'Teaching about religion' has become something of a technical phrase both in Europe and in the United States. Usually, teaching 'about' something means simply teaching the subject, as when the student goes home and tells his parents 'Mr. Jones has been teaching us about the Vikings today.' In recent years the word 'about' has come to be used as a form of adjective in an attempt to limit the content of the noun 'religion'. In fact the phrase probably owes its popularity to various United States Supreme Court decisions. They have on different occasions stipulated that, while no religion may be taught in public schools, teaching **about** religion is quite legal. 'Would it not be possible, therefore,' argues Rabbi Eugene B. Borowitz, 'to utilize the government's new openness to religion by teaching everyone about Judaism, thereby not only checking such prejudice as arises from ignorance but, more significantly, placing the prestige of the state behind the acceptance of Judaism as one of America's three great religious groups?'

These decades-old temptations have not been ended by the firmness of the Supreme Court decisions against teaching religion ... Like all self-seeking they reappear as soon as a new pretext is available. In this case, the eager ego need not create an imagined opportunity. The several justices immediately and objectively provided it in authorizing teaching "about" religion. The old hopes may have been thwarted. They merely reassert themselves in a different guise, this time with full legal sanction.' (1)

The reasons for this attempted limitation are fairly clear. The subject of religion on the state school curriculum is a delicate issue. 'Religion' is seen by many as having a content different in kind from other subjects on the curriculum. In bold outline we may say that people often take one of two different views of religion as a curriculum subject. On the one hand religious people who hold distinctive religious beliefs think that it will be badly taught; that certain 'right' beliefs and interpretations will be left out by the schools and therefore religion ought only to be taught in the home or by the church. On the other

hand certain non-religious groups feel that the teaching of religion is a paradigm context for indoctrination and for this reason religion ought not to be taught in state schools. These two reasons appear to afford grounds for educationists to introduce the qualifying word 'about' in an attempt to neutralise both views thereby enabling curriculum makers to include something of this vast area of concern in human experience.

II To teach 'about' X is to teach X

It does not seem educationally odd to say 'This week I am going to teach something about the essay as a form of literature'. Clearly 'teaching something about the essay' would unobjectionably involve teaching **that** the essay is this or that. In a series of such lessons on the essay, an attempt would be made to mark out the distinctive features of this form of literature and make precise connections with other forms of literature. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that at the end of such a series of lessons the students would know, within the limits of their own and their teacher's abilities, more or less precisely what the essay is, those characteristics which make it distinctive and its place in the the field of literature. It might at least be supposed that this is the intention of the teacher. It is in fact difficult to see any significant educational difference between teaching about X and teaching X.

There is a well-known saying 'To beat about the bush'. In educational terms this would roughly mean teaching peripheral matters rather than getting to the issues central to the subject under consideration. If proponents of the view that R.E. means teaching 'about' religion do not mean 'teaching religion' in the everyday meaning of the term as, for example, when a student says 'I've learned a lot about history from Mr. Jones', then it is almost certainly the case that we may understand their meaning in the sense of teaching those things which concern only peripheral matters in religion, or matters which are not religious at all such as 'the bible as literature' or 'a history of the Jews' or 'the story of the first Christians' or even something like 'the role of trade unions in the state'. If those who use the phrase 'teaching about religion' intend to convey that religion should not be taught in an indoctrinatory manner or in a way which presupposes that a form of conversion to a particular set of religious beliefs is expected then the phrase is lamentably loose. It does not do the job because it is too ambiguous and to make it less ambiguous would require a new set of

qualifying statements thereby making the word 'about' otiose. It is not even demonstrably the case that teaching 'about' religion 'manifestly excludes all teaching aimed at pupils' coming to hold any particular religious beliefs.' (2) It is entirely conceivable that a teacher who on religious principles rejects the use of blood transfusions may teach **about** certain Old Testament concepts concerning blood in such a manner as to guide his pupils' thoughts in one distinctively religious way.

It seems to me that use of the word 'about' to qualify 'religion' is a rather naive way of skirting problems such as indoctrination on the one hand, and what is sometimes called 'confessional' religion on the other. But these problems are often problems of method rather than content, and problems of method cannot be dismissed by a word. The way to tackle these and allied problems is to analyse more closely the meaning of education and the meaning of those aspects of religion which can in fact be taught. (3)

III Can Religion be taught?

A third view holds that religion cannot be taught at all. This view is an extension of the idea that religion is best taught at home or by the church on the grounds that important aspects must be avoided by the teacher's attempts to be objective. The argument is that teaching religion necessarily involves things other than propositional knowledge. According to this third view religion will not merely be poorly taught, and not merely that it is **in fact** not taught. Rather, it makes the logical point that whatever is said **about** religion cannot be religion, therefore religious education is not possible.

Arguing for this position in his article Is RE Possible? (4) Roger Marples claims 'There is more to (RE) than a cool dispassionate study of comparative religion ... The kind of approach which reduces RE to mere teaching **about** religion is no more religious education than instruction in the lives of the great composers is musical education... To ignore what it is to feel awe and wonder at the glory of God as well as the need to worship is to ignore the *raison d'être* of religion.' This view is supported by an argument in Harvey G.Cox's paper: Challenges to Our Educational System. He says there 'We would reject on educational grounds a chemistry course in which there was no opportunity for laboratory experience. Similarly, a course about religion which did not include some element of empathic

identification would likewise be educationally spurious.' (5)

I have tried to show that the phrase 'teaching about religion' is too ambiguous to be meaningful. If by this phrase we mean teaching peripheral matters (Hebrew history, history of ideas, morality, sociology and so on) then Marples would be right to conclude that this is not religious education. If, on the other hand, the phrase is equivalent to 'teaching religion' where this is meant to be merely parallel with 'teaching mathematics' or 'teaching literature' then we need to know more precisely and in educational terms what it means to teach X. The form 'teaching X' within the context of education as a second order concept goes some way towards an explanation of the phrase 'teaching religion'. Sufficient here to consider the more specific issues raised by Marples and Cox, regarding their argument as an example of a widely held general position, *viz.* that religious education involves more than teaching propositional knowledge and that without these other elements no education in religion can take place. Those who say that religion cannot be taught, or must in the nature of the - phenomenon be taught badly, are often referring to what might be called the **religious life** as opposed to an understanding of religion in educational terms. In other words there seem to be two ways in which we may understand 'teaching religion'. One is to teach 'the religious life' the other is to teach those things which will enable students to understand the religious life in a manner which entirely satisfies educational requirements. It seems to me that the latter is an essentially educational enterprise while the former is not. This is not to say that 'teaching the religious life' may not have some educational content. It is, rather, to say that teaching the religious life has for its explicit objective 'the religious life' whereas the activity of teaching those things which will enable students to understand the religious life has as its objective a knowledge and understanding of the religious life concomitant with the concept of education. On the face of it, therefore, not only is 'teaching about religion' ambiguous but so also is 'teaching religion'. Is this only to confront again the original objection? I think not. Accepting that 'teaching about religion' is too ambiguous to be meaningful, there would seem, now, to be no serious grounds for rejecting 'teaching religion' if by this is meant, centrally, teaching those concepts by which the experience of religion can be known and understood. It has no necessary connection with the student himself becoming 'religious'. If this is clear then those aspects of religion which Marples and Cox refer to are not, *per se*, the objectives of a religious **education**.

Marples says 'a cool dispassionate study' of religion is not sufficient. True enough if we are thinking of becoming religious. But such a disposition surely characterises all that goes on in **education**. If, therefore, 'a cool dispassionate study' is not sufficient for religion it is certainly sufficient for an education in religion. Marples thinks it essential to religious education that a student should 'feel awe and wonder at the glory of God as well as the need to worship'. Why should this be so if we are concerned with education? Is it impossible for anyone to understand this specifically religious feeling without having this precise feeling oneself? In any case is it ever possible to feel exactly as someone else does? How could this be known? And if it could be 'known' intuitively, how could it be taught? This is not to accept Marples' argument that religious education cannot be taught as a subject on the curriculum, for the same questions may be applied to many subjects where 'feelings' might be said to be involved. It is, rather, to accept that the 'religious life' in certain of its aspects cannot be taught. At this point Marples has switched concepts for he says that such feelings are the 'raison d'être of religion'. He does not say that awe, wonder and the need to worship God are the *raison d'être* of religious **education** but of **religion**, and, as we have seen and shall examine further, education has a different objective from that of the religious life.

Even so, I see nothing educationally objectionable in introducing students to places where these kinds of feelings or activities occur. For a fuller understanding of religion it would seem perfectly permissible to take students to places of worship where such manifestations of awe and wonder and the worship of God may be observed. After all, the only difference for the student between hearing a teacher in the classroom reading from the Old Testament for purposes of showing religious meanings, and hearing the Rabbi preaching in the synagogue is one of breadth and depth of understanding. The educational purpose in both activities is the deepening of the students' understanding of religion. If students join in the singing of hymns with some kind of feeling so much the better - for the purpose of understanding the phenomenon; as much may be done by the student if, in a study of communism, he went to Russia and for a time joined a group of pioneers. Use of the phrase 'teaching about religion' seems to me only to cover up an undignified rush for the fallout shelter against indoctrination. No shelter is required, as I have argued, because (a) use of the word 'about' is no protection against possible indoctrination, and (b) teaching, say, the Christian

belief 'sin' as a religious proposition is to teach 'what is the case' in this religion, and therefore a perfectly proper aspect of education.

Analogous activities abound in other subjects. In the teaching of literature a study of the novel centrally involves debate on how it may be understood. The educational objective is not that the student shall write a novel or that he will 'be' a writer (clearly analogous to 'being religious'). The many activities which go towards an education in literature in the classroom such as acting a play, poetry-reading, essay-writing, reading literary criticism, and visits to the theatre outside the classroom are none of them ends in themselves. They have a further and final objective. It is not that the students themselves shall become writers. The objective is that they shall come to understand the form of human experience known as literature; to be able to distinguish it from other aspects of knowledge. Any other spin-off - for example that a student does become a poet or journalist, thereby often delighting his teacher of literature - is incidental to the activity of teaching and learning literature.

The problem posed in Harvey G. Cox's article presents us with a similar logical distinction. If 'We would reject on educational grounds a chemistry course in which there was no opportunity for laboratory experience' we would indeed be rejecting a form of practical experience which is now seen as an important part of coming to understand chemistry; we would be rejecting exercises which help students to understand chemistry (i.e. a **method** of teaching). We would **not** be rejecting a knowledge of chemistry but only certain techniques which often (but not necessarily) help students to understand chemistry more easily. In this analogy, too, teachers are centrally concerned to teach an understanding of the subject. Teachers will not be centrally concerned that their students shall become chemists but to teach their students something of how the practising chemist works. To claim that a lack of 'empathic identification' is 'educationally spurious', as Harvey G. Cox does, is, moreover, to overstate the case, for it closes the gap that exists, on analysis, between engagement in a first order activity and a study of that engagement. In public education one may indeed 'empathise'; but to 'identify' could be a hazardous movement.

IV An Education in Religious Belief?

W.D. Hudson makes a distinction between an education 'in religious belief' and **about** religious belief. Only the first is, he says, 'strictly speaking, religious education'. (6) Education **in** religion, according to Hudson is 'unashamedly designed to initiate its recipients into theology and devotion. (7) I have argued that 'teaching about religion' is an inadequate phrase; and 'teaching religion' is acceptable only if it unambiguously means that the teacher teaches what the phenomenon is; what the religious person believes. 'Teaching religion' does not mean teaching students to participate in the 'religious life.' Contrary to what Hudson writes, therefore, one cannot be 'educated **in** religion', if that involves some form of religious commitment on the part of the student, because education as a second order form of experience seems to call for a certain kind of openness of mind akin to bringing one to the 'threshold'. It does not seem to require that the student shall acquire 'devotion' or 'commitment' to, say, mathematics, history, geography and so on; for the qualities of 'commitment' belong to the autonomous person, rather than to pupils struggling to grasp the meaning of their several concepts. Pupils, like anybody else, may will form commitments of one kind or another; but it does not seem to be the teacher's job, **qua** teacher, to teach pupils to be committed to one thing rather than another.

Hudson's reasoning (that 'initiation' must 'necessarily (be) initiation into some form of theology and devotion') leads him to conclude 'It is implied in the meaning of "education" that, as used by members of any community, it refers to initiation into activities which, in that community, are widely held to be ones in which there is good reason to engage.' (8) However, it must be doubted whether this has ever been clearly in the minds of either a community in which 'education' is seen as something more than occupational 'training' or by educationalists. If Hudson means that the teacher (or community) intends the autonomous (i.e. 'educated') person **to pursue the practice of** whatever is being learnt in school then a person may never need to undergo studies in, say, history mathematics, geography, politics, science or music. It also means that in some countries (e.g. the U.S.A. and West Germany) a student would not be allowed to study, say, communism, for certainly he would not be legally able to 'engage' in certain activities which follow from an 'initiation' into and 'devotion' to certain forms of communism. Is it even possible to reconcile Hudson's interpretation of 'initiation' **into** activities which (by Hudson's definition) the ex-student will continue

to practice with the idea of 'independence of mind' which Hudson (rightly, I believe) thinks is 'built into the very concept of education'? (9) As Ryle argues (10) 'How in logic can the teacher drag his pupil into thinking for himself, impose initiative upon him, drive him into self-motion, conscript him into volunteering, enforce originality upon him, or make him operate spontaneously? The answer is that he cannot.' What the teacher does, concludes Ryle, is to give the student the **modus operandi**. It is the student who operates in the final analysis. I think we are entitled to conclude from this that the 'independence of mind' praised by Hudson is generated by the teacher's passing on the **modus operandi**. It is a logical impossibility for the teacher to 'enforce originality' etc., on the student. Yet this - 'initiative', 'self-motivation', 'originality' and 'spontaneity' - is what the student now has; it is how he now operates. And because of this the student's education is not an initiation **into**, say, communism or religion (in the sense that he will 'practice' these things or 'devote' himself to them); rather, it is an opening of the mind to what these things mean. To possess the **modus operandi** is not necessarily to write a good essay, paint a good picture, be a good soldier or to become religious; it is to possess the signs of recognition by which the student may choose to operate. To choose **not** to practice, not to engage in, what one has learnt is to operate the 'independence of mind' thought necessary to the concept of education by Hudson. Further, and contrary to Hudson's point that there must be a 'limit to reasoning' in RE, I would argue that education necessarily involves the possibility of 'the abandonment of religious belief' (11) on the grounds that reasons for thinking one way rather than another constitute a necessary element in education. It is not, perhaps, odd to prescribe limits to reasoning 'within religious belief', but it does seem odd to prescribe limits to reasoning in education. If it is true, as Hudson argues, that belief in 'god' is necessary to the person who sees the world as 'religious', it does not follow that the student in school cannot entertain reasons for changing his view of the world. In any case this does not alter my argument that a student does not have to be 'engaged' (in terms of 'devotion' or commitment) in religious practice in order to be educated in religion.

Hudson is surely correct when he says that teaching 'about' religion, where that means to 'acquaint pupils with, say, the literature and history of religion' (12) is not RE. But since, by its ambiguity as I have tried to show, teaching 'about' religion could, conceivably, include much that is central to religion, the distinction seems worthless. However, I would also argue that Hudson goes

too far in maintaining that the only alternative is an 'initiation' into 'devotion'. I believe there is a compromise, one which explains more fully the notion of 'religion' within the context of education seen as an enterprise whose intention is to bring students to the threshold of life (i.e. first order forms of experience) by imparting a knowledge of religion. Carried with this idea is the notion that we can (and intend to) bring students to the 'water', but that we cannot, logically or morally, make them 'drink'. The logical point is explicit in my argument that education is a second order form of experience; the moral point is implied in the contention - developed by R.F. Dearden and others, for example - that education has as an aim the autonomy of the individual one important aspect of which is the concept of the freedom to choose what to think and what to be. (13)

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- 11 Hudson, W. D., (1973) op. cit., p. 185.
- 12 Ibid., p. 189.
- 13 See Dearden, R. F., 'Autonomy and education' in Dearden, R. F., Hirst, P. H., and Peters, R. S. (Eds.) **Education and the Development of Reason**, Part 3. See also Reid, L. A., **Philosophy and Education** (London: Heinemann, 1962), p. 40, and Peters, R. S. (1966) op. cit., Chapter VII.

RELIGION AND KNOWLEDGE

A still, small voice

I The conceptual connection

Does it matter what we teach in RE? Of course it matters, we might say. But the question is not merely rhetorical; it is one of meaning. For if we say it matters what we teach in RE we must be seriously concerned to know why it matters. We are concerned to know the answer because clarity in educational objectives matters. For example, if we taught a series of RE lessons in which class 4b learnt a great deal about the geography of Palestine or the history of the Jews between 587BC and 65BC but came to know next to nothing about the development of Jewish beliefs in that period, then in what way would such a series of lessons differ from, say, geography or history?

To achieve clarity in RE certain criteria, that is, certain grounds for being able to distinguish between, say, history and religion, must be recognized. Criteria for deciding what something is act like rules in a game. Without rules in a game we should not know that a certain complex of activities constituted a game, let alone what that game might be. Consider the statement: 'Islam/power/money/communism/football is my religion.' It is not uncommon to hear any one of these subjects called 'religion'. The list does not end there, and we are entitled to be confused as to what elements, if any, distinguish a subject as 'religion' in a less confusing way. An RE teacher could have nightmares in trying to cope with an ever expanding list. Again, some people think that if one is 'good' (an 'upright', 'honest' citizen) then one is religious. (cp. 'He's a real Christian.') Others think that if one is religious then it follows that he will be (or try to be) a 'good citizen.' (cp. 'Did you read about Mr. Smith trying to get away with not paying tax? And he's supposed to be a Christian!') If it emerges from such common views that there are grave misunderstandings in society about what a 'religious person' or Christian or Muslim is then a teacher of religion might well be concerned to make the criteria for this phenomenon as clear as possible, both to himself and to his students, in order to make

sound judgments on the nature and meaning of religion.

The search for meaning in human experience is largely a question of coming to know more precisely what we judge an experience to be **of**; and centrally involved in the judgment will be the use of criteria. Determining that an experience is one thing rather than another involves some sort of demarcation between experiences; for not all who bow their foreheads to the ground are Muslim; not all who pay their taxes are Christian. An understanding of the world arises precisely by means of a grasp of publicly accepted criteria. Thus, in order to arrive at an understanding of, for example, the Christian concept 'sin' we may ask: What are the **necessary** features of this concept? And we shall doubtless discover that at least one of the criteria necessary in coming to understand this concept is the notion of 'separation.' And so it is for religion as a whole. A philosophical aspect of the question: Does it matter what we teach in RE? then, requires some investigation into the nature of the concept 'religion.' But this is only part of the inquiry, for we are also concerned with the idea 'education.' We may find it inappropriate to teach religion in certain of its forms in state schools. One form of religion a secular school might reject is 'religious worship', or teaching how to worship.

Perhaps one of the most important considerations in the teaching of religion is whether we can make the claim to 'know' religious statements. This is important because in examining the nature of religion and in our attempts to determine criteria by which we may recognize religious phenomena we shall also be judging its worth against other curriculum subjects in terms of the meaning of the educational enterprise as a whole. It is not difficult to imagine people - parents and even teachers - saying: We can **prove** what is taught in science, but the so-called 'religious knowledge' taught in RE can only be believed, and how can one talk about knowing what one can only believe? Further, it could be argued that religion is not a fit area of study for public examinations on the grounds that it is a private matter, something to do with an individual's conscience and his God alone. Even more importantly one must consider that if the objective of education is the development of the rational mind and religion is to play a part in this then whether we can be said to 'know' something of religious statements (as distinct from knowing other people's minds, or having historical knowledge etc.,) is crucial to the nature of education with regard to its religion component. For, as Paul Hirst argues in opposing the view that knowledge is 'something

which the mind may or may not possess': 'To be without any knowledge at all is to be without mind in any significant sense. Nor is it just that the mind needs some content to work on, as if otherwise its characteristics could not be expressed. The acquisition of knowledge is itself a development of mind and new knowledge means a new development of mind in some sense. Knowledge is not a free-floating possession. It is a characteristic of minds themselves. Thus to fail to acquire knowledge of a certain fundamental kind, is to fail to achieve rational mind in that significant respect... the fundamental relationship between knowledge and the development of mind is of central educational significance.' (1)

In his examination of the question whether it matters what is taught in RE, then, the teacher will want to know what sort of grounds there could be for thinking that religious statements can be in some sense 'true', that is, statements of knowledge. To be specific, what could constitute a criterion of truth for the Muslim claim 'Allah is One'? Let us recognize that this is not just a question of knowing what other people believe, although that is involved in RE, and the phenomenological approach, such as that of Ninian Smart discussed in chapter eight, goes some way towards satisfying this knowledge. The teacher of religion will also wish to be aware of how a 'knowledge' status could be claimed for religious statements, before he goes on to discuss the meaning - and status - of other people's beliefs.

I have spoken of the need for criteria and demarcation in the process of coming to know the meaning of phenomena, for this is how we normally identify that something is one thing and not another. It might be useful, here, to look briefly at the mechanics of 'criteria' as a step towards our understanding - and teaching - of religious knowledge. When we have the criteria, the grounds, by which we come to recognize, say, a tree, it may be said that we hold the concept 'tree.' But we do not hold this concept in a private manner. Our concept of 'tree' is a public one. The way or ways in which we distinguish 'tree' from 'chair' must be acceptable, at least in principle, by other people. This public way of forming concepts or holding criteria suggests that we may speak of the concept 'tree' in such a way that the concept takes on, so to say, a life of its own. (We may speak of objects like 'tree' or ideas like 'democracy' having concepts peculiar to them, despite difficulties in coming to final agreement.) And because concepts can become independent in this way we are able to determine when someone makes a mistake in identifying something. Thus, being able to correctly

identify either a concrete object like 'tree' or abstract notions like mathematics or religion depends on our grasp of the concepts which we can attribute to objects or notions by means of public agreement. We may say that knowledge is **created** by a recognition of certain characteristics central to our understanding of a phenomenon, the concepts peculiar to it. By a progression of the same line of thought we may say that knowledge is **increased** through our recognition of the distinctive characteristics of phenomena. If it is entitled to be thought of as 'knowledge' therefore, whatever is taught in schools must relate in some significant way to the concepts central to the subject-matter being taught. (None of this is to prejudge teaching **methods**, of course. Approaching the religious beliefs of the Jews in 587BC by first showing pictures of the hanging gardens of Babylon does not alter the point at issue.) For example, if in a purported literary study of **The Mayor of Casterbridge** a teacher were to discuss only the town of Dorchester at the time of the Tolpuddle Martyrs we would surely agree that the point has been missed. For whatever we learn of early 19th century Dorchester and its officials, and however important the topic is in a general education, the concepts central to Hardy's novels, **qua** literature, have nothing to do with history, politics or geography. For it would probably be agreed by teachers of literature that nineteenth century Dorchester has little to tell us about Hardy's Casterbridge. The point is that concepts in the study of literature cannot be transformed into, or reduced to, concepts that characterise other subjects. If there were a serious degree of arbitrariness in the way people understand the world, the way they choose to conceptualize it, then not only would a knowledge claim be empty of significance but there could also be no communication between people in the way this is usually understood.

At the same time we must acknowledge that our ideas of what the world is like change from time to time. Up to the sixteenth century theology, mathematics and science were not always thought of as different ways of experiencing the world. Fundamental differences between them emerged gradually as it was realized that the criteria for judging something to belong to the field of science were different in kind from criteria by which we determine the subject-matter of theology and mathematics, and so on. Thus by a complicated interplay of agreement and recognizable grounds for disagreement man's knowledge of the world increases. We shall say more of this in a while. Sufficient to say here that in trying to pick out concepts we believe to be central to, say, religion or morality; in looking for a distinctive structure and for criteria underlying

that structure, 'we will not measure the success of conceptual analysis by the extent to which we can produce definitions. Rather we will measure it by the extent to which our understanding is thereby increased about how things are in the world.' (2) What matters at this point is for us to recognize that basic differences in subject-matter are determined by different criteria and by different conceptual structures which have been attributed to them.

II 'Conversation' and the development of knowledge

I should like to invoke the language of Michael Oakeshott in order to further illustrate man's development in knowledge. Oakeshott uses the notion of 'conversation' to characterise the fields of human knowledge. (3) Briefly, Oakeshott's view supposes that all human discourse, man's knowledge of the universe, may be regarded as **conversation**. Conversation ordinarily consists of people talking to one another in an unstructured manner; there are different 'voices' in conversation. Most common among these 'voices' in the conversation of knowledge are those of 'practical activity' and 'science', and man's conversation over the past few hundred years has become 'boring because it has been engrossed' by them. The voice of 'practical activity' may be characterised by very ordinary traits in man, by 'desire and aversion' and by attitudes of 'approval' and 'disapproval.' It is a voice that talks about the world of 'fact' and 'not-fact.' It engages itself in seeking what is pleasurable and in avoiding pain. Activity in life and that of other people is only understood in terms of 'the use that may be made of it.' A main objective in the skills of 'practical activity' is to place as much distance as possible between 'the desiring self and death.' Recognition of other 'selves' is tolerated only with difficulty by the voice of 'practical activity'; where 'peremptory command' is insufficient to 'convert another self to my purposes' such conversion may be achieved by a **quid pro quo** arrangement, perhaps 'of short duration', for it is to serve only the gratification of its own ends. The voice of 'practical activity' in the conversation of mankind knows 'how to contrive a world of approval and pleasure-giving images.'

The voice of 'science', well acquainted with the voice of 'practical activity', is more refined, more precise. It is created by man in order to satisfy the urge for a rational understanding and ordering of the world. By its conscious application of a distinctive methodology 'science' becomes independent of 'practical activity.' The scientist is able to move 'freely within current scientific theory.' He specu-

lates and makes guesses 'about directions of profitable advance;' he is able to pursue 'his conjectures in such a manner as to produce significant and unambiguous conclusions.' Where 'practical activity' seeks its own pleasure 'science' 'is essentially a co-operative enterprise.' And since 'science' is an activity rather than a body of information its guiding principle 'is the exclusion of whatever is private, esoteric, or ambiguous.'

Oakeshott describes these 'voices' within the 'conversation' of knowledge in order to sharpen the distinction that exists between them, the most common elements in contemporary 'conversation', and the voice of 'poetry.' For although the voice of 'poetry' in the conversation (containing talk in 'painting' sculpting, acting, dancing, singing, literary and musical composition') has never been silent it has in the recent past been misrepresented as some form of 'practical activity' or 'science'. People are apt to say that 'poetry' expresses some kind of 'truth', sometimes called 'poetic truth'; that poets see "'things as they really are'"; or that the poet expresses 'experiences which the poet himself has enjoyed and wishes others to enjoy also.' But 'truth' and 'reality' or the expressions of the emotions are concepts borrowed from the world of 'practical activity' and 'science' and to describe the voice of 'poetry' in ways like this is to be in danger of confusing it with the other voices in the conversation. If there is any 'truth' in the voice of 'poetry' it has nothing to do with 'propositions' that are characteristic of 'science', or with 'fact' and 'not-fact' with which 'practical activity' is so much concerned. Such language can only be used analogously of 'poetry' for all the voices of conversation are distinctive 'and the images of one universe of discourse are not available (even as raw material) to a different mode of imagining.'

This short excursion into Oakeshott's thinking is intended to serve as a prolegomenon for what I have to say about knowledge and religion. For I wish to suggest that religion is another 'voice' in the 'conversation' by which man comes to understand the world. And as a separate voice is different in kind from others in the conversation. Unlike Oakeshott I shall not attempt to describe the voice of religion in any great detail because that would require a book of its own and an author comparable to the task. But so much has been said about religion and about knowledge in recent years that it is possible - perhaps only embryonically possible - to discern characteristics, a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, which may be taken to indicate the formation of a more specific

outline of what might constitute a knowledge of religion concomitant with what can be taught in compulsory education. In seeking these characteristics, however, let us recall a nice turn of phrase used by Richard Rorty 'we shall be looking for an airtight case rather than an unshakable foundation,' (4) 'the point of edifying philosophy is to keep the conversation going rather than to find objective truth' for '**conversation** (is) the ultimate context within which knowledge is to be understood.' (5) Perhaps we shall find, in the following pages, that a number of philosophical contributions can be made to the voice of religion in the conversation. I shall therefore attempt to provide a synoptic account of a number of diverse and seemingly intractable problems concerning what it might mean to claim to know something about religion. I shall conclude that it is philosophically respectable to make a knowledge claim for religion and that religion has characteristics which mark off a distinctive area in human experience. It is this distinctive area which, I would claim must be taught in schools if religious education is to go on. But first an example of what can happen when philosophers confuse one 'voice' with another as, it seems to me, so-called 'positivists' have done in the recent past.

III The falsification argument

I have said that in RE, as in any other curriculum subject in which the nature of the material is to be understood in terms of its concepts, the teacher must teach 'what is the case' and not merely take inaccurate shots in the general direction of a vaguely seen target. Indeed, in all subjects taught there is a danger that the teacher will mistake the passing on of a mass of information by means of exposing students to a great variety of experiences for a direct attack on the target itself as this is characterised by distinctive concepts. Whenever teachers do make this mistake it may be said that the student learns 'in spite of' his teacher since the student has to make his own way to the target by identifying for himself the significant from the not so significant information with which he is provided.

A major difficulty confronting religion is that it has been doubted whether there can be something that 'is the case'; that the idea of 'knowing something' in religion is incomprehensible. If this be so, it follows that religion can have no concepts peculiar to it. Any concepts attached to what we call 'religion' must be reducible to some other form of knowledge such as psychology or ethics.

It should also follow from this that religion as a distinctive area of knowledge cannot be taught. The charge of 'nonsense' has been made against religious claims and strongly argued by the so-called 'logical positivist' school of thought.
(6)

Positivism had its first systematic expression in the thinking of Auguste Comte. Comte made a severe distinction between what he saw as the only knowledge possible, the empirical world of the senses - the 'truth' as he called it - and all other ways of thinking which cannot be reduced to 'knowledge' by means of 'the facts.' 'All competent thinkers agree with Bacon' says Comte 'that there can be no real knowledge except that which rests upon observed facts... In brief, we must look upon all scientific theories as so many great logical facts; and it is only by a thorough observation of these facts that we can rise to the knowledge of logical laws.' (7) Comte argues that 'positivist' thinking is the third and final stage in the history of man's intellectual development. (The first two being the 'theological or fictitious state' and the 'metaphysical or abstract state.') His 'encyclopedic formula' distinguishes six areas of knowledge. They are: mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, physiology and social physics (i.e. sociology).

Following Comte (and Hume) closely the thinking of the 'positivists' is sometimes characterised by a well-known formula. Every statement or proposition must belong to one of three categories. A statement is either I) analytic (as in mathematics and formal logic); II) synthetic (as in science); or III) metaphysical (as in any statement that belongs to neither I) nor II). All metaphysical statements are meaningless or 'nonsense.' (See A.J. Ayer's Preface to the first edition of **Language, Truth and Logic.**)

Positivist thinking is particularly attracted to the principle of 'verification'. 'In its first explicit formulation' says Flew 'the principle stated that the meaning of a sentence lies in its method of verification; and it was immediately explained that all significant assertions must be either contingent, synthetic, and verifiable in experience, or else necessary and analytic.' (8) But this formulation can be difficult to apply. For example, if we wished to verify the empirical hypothesis that all birds can fly we would need to know at least one thing about every bird in the world, i.e., that it can fly. It is much easier to test the hypothesis by attempting to disprove it, since the first bird we find that cannot fly will

terminate this part of the inquiry. As Flew says 'In the sciences there is no doubt at all but that progress is possible. With a scientific hypothesis you can know where you stand. Determinate consequences follow from it. If these do not in fact obtain then that hypothesis - at least in its first unqualified form - can be definitely rejected as false. If they do obtain, then we can at least be reasonably sure that we are on our way. The same does not appear to apply with the more sophisticated theistic statements.' (9) And in his falsification argument Flew attempts to demolish all theistic claims which also claim to be 'assertions.' He takes the stance (10) that statements to the effect that God exists assert nothing but only masquerade as truth. This, he thinks, is a logical consequence of an assertion's only having meaning in its denial of something. Thus, to be meaningful, the statement 'I am holding a pen' must deny that I am holding a feather or a fork. The assertion must be demonstrably incompatible with its denial or negation. Similarly, the statement 'God exists' must deny some empirical fact about the world; the two states must be demonstrably incompatible. Flew sees the meaninglessness of the statement 'God exists' in the theory that there is nothing in the world which would be demonstrably incompatible with this assertion. It is just as meaningful, or meaningless, to assert 'God does not exist'. Nothing seems to be different, or significant, with the assertion of either one or both statements. If the statement 'I am holding a pen' could equally mean 'I am holding a feather' then the statement 'I am holding a pen' becomes meaningless. Flew is arguing on the assumption that theological statements of this kind are empirical assertions and not 'crypto-commands, expressions of wishes, disguised ejaculations, concealed ethics.' There is a sense in which Flew is correct to assume that the sentence 'God exists' is connected to the physical world since, as the gospel writer John asserts, the Christian is concerned with the antecedents and sequels to 'The Word became flesh.' (11) But there is more to be said about religious claims and their connection with the empirical world.

However, the falsification principle is not entirely watertight and much has been written to indicate the doubtful logic of the position as described, for example, by Flew. (12) I shall not examine the counter arguments in detail although much of what I have to say in the following sections will indicate the direction of serious objections. Sufficient to mention here that, for example, the hypothesis 'every event has a cause' is not easily conceived to be falsifiable yet it is used as a working empirical hypothesis in science. Further, a major

part of the difficulty in accepting the falsification criterion in the way it is often used lies in its assumption that only observed 'facts' can give us knowledge. Yet it is now appreciated that 'facts' can be observed in a significant manner only by being immediately absorbed by, or seen in the context of, previously accepted concepts. For, how would we know that it is a dog we are looking at without some previously accepted concept 'dog'? This indicates that there are grounds other than empirical ones for coming to know that something is the case. This objection is not intended as an argument for a merely subjective form of knowledge that can in no way be verified. I take the point made by Pring 'That we distinguish between cats and dogs may be due to certain social conditions; that we **can** so distinguish has something to do with cats and dogs.' (13) The point is, rather, that so-called 'facts' cannot be **simply** observed and regarded either as 'knowledge' or as progress in knowledge. Although 'knowledge' has to do with cats and dogs the precise relationship remains opaque. 'Fact' says Oakeshott 'is what has been made or achieved; it is the product of judgment. And if there be an unalterable datum in experience, it certainly cannot consist of fact. Fact, then, is not what is given, it is what is achieved in experience. Facts are never merely observed, remembered or combined; they are always made'. (14) Put another way: a fact is not something like a dog that can be empirically observed in an obvious way. A fact is, rather, a statement concerning what is believed to be observed. It has been doubted (for example by Kuhn and Popper) whether knowledge in science could ever progress on the basis of traditional experimental science. Of Einstein's theories Popper says that they are 'highly speculative' and far removed from an "observational basis." (15)

IV Eschatological verification

There are, then, weaknesses in the falsification/verification argument against theistic knowledge. But before examining alternative ways of thinking it is worth looking briefly at the view of one theologian who meets the verification challenge almost head on. John Hick (16) takes the view that the Christian claim 'God exists' is a claim of empirical fact and verifiable in principle. The verification of the existence of God makes sense, says Hick, 'only if the logically prior idea of continued personal existence after death is intelligible.' And 'continued personal existence' is best conceived as 'an indissoluble psycho-physical unity' much as it is described by Paul in First Corinthians chapter fifteen.

The idea is not 'self-contradictory' Hick claims, and therefore cannot be ruled out as meaningless, for it is 'subject to future verification.' But since survival after death in this way is not sufficient to verify theism, it is necessary to state the conditions under which it could be claimed that the state of the resurrected body is incompatible with the non-existence of God. For the 'mere fact of survival, with a new body in a new environment, would not demonstrate to (the atheist) that there is a God.'

The step between a verifiable resurrection life and the conclusion that God exists is the recognition of a distinctively religious, unambiguous **situation** pointing to 'the existence of a loving God.' Hick suggests two forms of experience which, together, would provide this unambiguous situation within the Christian religion. The first is a Christian's experience of 'a certain valuable quality of personal life, the content of which is given in the character of Christ ... the source of man's final self-fulfillment and happiness.' A Christian must be able to recognize his own conscious participation in such a quality of life. The second circumstance must involve a recognition that what is thought to be the fulfillment of God's purpose **is** God's purpose 'and not simply a natural state of affairs.' And what is required in coming to a realization of this is 'an experience of communion with God as he has made himself known to men in Christ.' The phrase 'in Christ' is essential, for without the teaching of Christ, the Incarnation, the 'self-disclosure' of the Father, we could not know that it is **God** that is being encountered; the absolute terms in which God is described in Christian theology - 'omnipotence, omnipresence, perfect goodness, infinite love' and so on - would preclude that recognition by finite minds. But such qualities 'are susceptible of indirect verification by the removal of rational doubt concerning the authority of Christ. An experience of the reign of the Son in the Kingdom of the Father would confirm that authority.' These two forms of experience 'assure us beyond rational doubt of the reality of God.' Hick adds that although the notion of eschatological verification has been greeted with disapproval 'no viable alternative to it has been offered to establish the factual character of theism.'

One significant weakness we may point to in Hick's thesis arises from his basic assertion that there is a recognizable continuum between present experience and a resurrection experience. If what Hick has in mind is identifiable in important respects - as it seems to be - with the resurrection experience

described by St. Paul then, despite the resurrection 'pictures' sketched by Hick in his explanation of its theoretical possibility, does Hick's account amount to a satisfactory reply to the verificationist's demand for the right to be sure? What, for example, could be meant by the essential differences that St. Paul hints at between the **soma psychikon** and the **soma pneumatikon**? It is surely not sufficient to say, as Hick does, 'we may well abandon the word "spiritual" as lacking today any precise established usage,' for it is precisely this distinction that St. Paul wishes to make and which stands at the centre of the argument.

However, we may ask: Is it necessary, in view of the inherent weaknesses in the verification/falsification argument as presented earlier, to construe a knowledge of religion in terms of factual propositions that are verifiable in a scientific manner? A quite different approach to theistic knowledge to that of Hick's can be identified in contemporary thinking. We shall look at views for which the criteria for knowledge are neither straightforwardly 'factual' nor strictly 'relative' or 'subjective' but consist of an intricate combination of factors.

V Popper's 'World Three': a starting point for knowledge?

According to Popper, falsification marks the difference between science and non-science, not between meaningful and meaningless statements. 'Take a square to represent the class of all statements of a language in which we intend to formulate a science; draw a broad horizontal line, dividing it into an upper and lower half; write "science" and "testable" into the upper half, and "metaphysics" and "non-testable" into the lower: then, I hope, you will realize that I do **not** propose to draw the line of demarcation in such a way that it coincides with the limits of a language, leaving science inside, and banning metaphysics by excluding it from the class of meaningful statements. On the contrary.' (17)

For Popper, knowledge begins with an idea about the world; a conjecture, an imaginary construction, a myth, even a guess. The 'idea' constitutes the 'problem situation' from which all knowledge springs. Indeed, 'all - or very nearly all - scientific theories originate from myths.' (18) And 'the way in which knowledge progresses ... is by unjustified (and unjustifiable) ... conjectures.' (19-) These are the characteristics of Popper's 'world three'. Our 'world one'

is that 'of physical objects or of physical states'; 'world two' is the subjective world of the mind, or 'states of consciousness.' 'World three' (a term which is 'merely a matter of convenience') is 'the world of objective contents of thought, especially of scientific and poetic thoughts and of works of art.' (20) Although world three is created by ourselves, it is, by virtue of its objectivity, autonomous; 'The world of language, of conjectures, theories and arguments - in brief, the universe of objective knowledge - is one of the most important of these man-created, yet at the same time largely autonomous, universes.' (21) The greatest significance of world three is that 'it is through the interaction between ourselves (i.e. as members of the first and second worlds) and the third world that objective knowledge grows.' (22) World three, then, comprises imaginative ideas, myths, conjectures, theories and arguments. It is the nucleus or power-unit of all knowledge; it is, to use a phrase, in the world but not of the world. The general idea of world three is not entirely Popper's own creation, though he has filled it out and given to it very distinctive characteristics. He writes 'Kant saw with perfect clarity that the history of science had refuted the Baconian myth that we must begin with observations in order to derive our theories from them.' (23) And again 'Kant saw more clearly than anyone before or since how absurd it was to assume that Newton's theory could be derived from observation.' (24)

There is also, I think, some parallel between Kant's insight, Popper's world three and more contemporary thought. For example, there is Kuhn's idea of a 'paradigm shift' in science. For Kuhn, 'normal science' does not aim at novelities of fact or theory 'and, when successful, finds none.' (25) A new picture of the world - the 'novel' - comes from the scientist who sees a new 'paradigm' rather than a new fact. 'Paradigms are not corrigible by normal science at all. Instead ... normal science ultimately leads only to the recognition of anomalies and crises. And these are terminated, not by deliberation and interpretation, but by a relatively sudden and unstructured event like the gestalt switch. Scientists then often speak of the "scales falling from the eyes" or of the "lightning flash" that "inundates" a previously obscure puzzle, enabling its components to be seen in a new way that for the first time permits its solution.' (26) Kuhn examines this phenomenon with reference to the work of Joseph Priestley and Lavoisier in the discovery of oxygen. Priestley constantly thought in terms of the old paradigm so that 'he saw the gas as dephlogisticated air.' (27) On the other hand, 'Grant now that discovery involves an extended, though

not necessarily long, process of conceptual assimilation. Can we also say that it involves a change in paradigm? ... The answer must be yes.' (28) It may be difficult to say who exactly 'discovered' oxygen (in terms of isolating a distinctive gas) but whereas Priestley saw it as 'dephlogisticated air', it is Lavoisier who must be credited with the oxygen theory of combustion that 'was the keystone for a reformulation of chemistry so vast that it is usually called the chemical revolution.' (29) What, for Kuhn, is the paradigm shift, the 'unstructured event', the 'gestalt switch', the 'lightning flash' is, for Popper, a 'third world' in which the conjecture 'playing a hunch' is of critical importance. In both cases, science arises, and progress is made possible, in a way it has not been able to before. Thereafter 'normal science' works on the new paradigm 'swan'. The 'guess' in Popper's world three is like the 'unstructured event' or 'novelty' in Kuhn's revolution. Yet another illustration of this form of thinking may be seen in the history of the development of radar. Len Deighton writes 'the most remarkable thing about radar is that no one invented it long before Kuhnold's Experiments (in 1934). There were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of scientists and experts paid by their governments to advise on such scientific matters. The phenomenon of radio waves re-radiating from distant aircraft was repeatedly mentioned in professional journals ... Yet these (radio interferences) were simply treated as problems to be solved.' (Kuhn's 'normal science'). '...Watson-Watt's first guesses' (Popper's world three 'conjecture' and Kuhn's 'swan') 'set British radar off to a good beginning.' (30) For both Kuhn and Popper scientific development, new knowledge, is due to new ways of seeing the world rather than the simple addition of information.

The question for religion is whether it may be conceived as an inhabitant of world three (or, comparably, whether religion may be regarded as a Kuhnian paradigm which, as yet, not everyone can 'see'). If we start from the simple point that religion is a 'hunch' about the world, then obviously it may take its place in world three alongside any other 'conjecture'. In this case religion is a conjectural state of affairs which purports to offer a solution to the problem (for example): Why is the world structured as it is? Does its structure not suggest a divine designer? Expressed like this, can the problem be refined by reference to Popper's formula:

PI - TS - EE - P2

(problem situation; trial solution, error elimination by testing, leading to problem two, and so on)? Popper says 'If we look upon a theory as a proposed solution to a set of problems, then the theory immediately lends itself to critical discussion - even if it is non-empirical and irrefutable.' (31) Moreover, one is not **bound**, says Popper, to replace irrefutable theories 'by empirically testable theories, in order to make a rational discussion possible.' (32) It is possible to conclude from this that Popper's formula for the development of knowledge may be applied to the religious conjecture that the world - which includes human beings and their search for an answer to the metaphysical questions posed above - is structured as it is because there is a transcendent intelligence at its origin. But the formula may be applied only in a limited way. What we cannot properly conclude from Popper's thesis is that the formula can be applied in an **empirically** testable manner. So much is obvious because, although the idea of a transcendent being (for example) cannot be falsified, it also cannot be verified by empirical means; this impossibility is determined by the nature of the conjecture which, although arising in experience, does not allow an empirical-type test. But on this Popper would agree. Popper has been criticized precisely on the point that his world three is worthless because it seems to exclude nothing. Reviewing Schilpp's (Edited) **The Philosophy of Karl Popper** (1974), D.H. Mellor refers to the contents of world three as 'metaphysical monstrosities.' (33) Mellor allows that language might be a significant inhabitant of world three. However, it could be argued that the virtue of world three lies in its presentation of an alternative road to knowledge other than the one offered by those who consider that the building-bricks of knowledge are statements about our immediate sense experience, such as statements used in ostensive definitions, or what A. Quinton has called 'basic statements', and the latter idea itself has been suspect for a long time. (34) The fact that Popper's formula may not be used to attempt an empirical rationale for religion simply, but significantly, indicates that religion is not science but some other way of seeing the world. Mellor's criticism cannot seriously touch world three's 'monstrosities' because Popper's formula offers an opportunity for us to transform them into generally acceptable (if not empirically testable) statements. And this applies as much to world three's religious inhabitants as to any other inhabitant. The stricture of non-empirical testability applies to many areas of human experience; to ethics and value-judgments, to literature, music, historical judgment and so on, none of which is 'scientific' but all of which contribute to our knowledge of the world. It is even possible to see how progress, in terms of 'error elimina-

tion' may be made in these experiences since statements in religion, art and historical judgment, for example, may be 'refuted' by reference, and in relation, to previously accepted thinking within the area of experience.

We may ask, What kind of thing would count as an 'error elimination' process in religious knowledge? John Wilson suggests what 'progress' might mean in religious knowledge: 'We do not have to tie "God" down to our own experiences: we can rest the word on the experiences of other people past and present, and trust their assertions about God whenever these seem reliable ... we do not have to tie the word down in such a way as to deny ourselves the possibility of incorporating future experiences within the same concept. By "God" we can mean "at least so-and-so", and still believe that there is a great deal more for which the word could stand ... Our increase of knowledge about God throughout the ages will obviously enlarge our concept of God; and the word "God" itself will take on more meaning.' (35) Such 'progress', by means of the 'error elimination' process, might be precisely illustrated by the Christian idea of the Trinity. First-century Christian experience of deity, it might be argued, was ambiguous. While it is certainly true that the first Christians could work effectively with their (basically Hebrew) idea of God, with their 'risen lord' and by the aid of his 'spiritual' power, they were necessarily unaware of 'anomalies' which arose as a result of later New Testament presentations of these three powers. Only after a great deal of intense examination over a period of some three hundred years was the church able to resolve the 'anomalous' factors by the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Whatever limitations there might be in linking Popper's thinking on science with matters of religion, his idea of world three, together with some form of 'test situation' does not seem to be one of them. One further criticism of Popper's notion that world three objects can be thought 'autonomous' and therefore items of objective knowledge may be considered. Anthony O'Hear argues that 'scientific theories and artistic styles are controlled in their development and in the ways they affect us by the facticity of their respective materials (nature and artistic media).' (36) While this is surely true, it remains arguable that the 'facts' themselves are not 'objective' in any clear sense. For there seems to be an important way in which 'facts' are dependent for their meaning upon the language we construct for them. And it is, perhaps, by this balance of objects external to us (e.g. forks and feathers), and language constructed by us (our ability to distinguish conceptually between forks and feathers) that the notion of 'auto-

nomy' for the inhabitants of world three may find their origin and significance. We may then proceed with the 'tests' appropriate to the particular world three object under consideration.

VI World views

I have indicated that the subject-matter of religion is the physical world, albeit non-falsifiable by empirical means (e.g. 'The word became flesh'). That is to say, whatever paraphysical entities religion entertains it stands in direct contact with the world in the sense that whatever is said in religious statements, for example, about God, sin or salvation, arises initially in what human beings are or do in the world. Indeed, it is because human beings are what they are that religious questions of meaning arise in the first place: for example, Could there be a super-human intelligence 'behind' what we see as the physical world? As D.H. Mellor observes: 'If statements of Christ's humanity and divinity are not both taken to refer to one and the same individual, they lose all their religious point.' (37) This does not mean that religious statements must, or even can, be established by empirical means. That there is a wholly historical (i.e. non-religious) account of Jesus' life does not exclude the possibility that there is also a religious account of his life. And the two accounts need not be contradictory; they may well be complementary. The same may be said of any person or event. The status of religious knowledge does not stand or fall by reference to empirical evidence, producible by scientific testing, any more than the status of empirical knowledge is affected by religious knowledge. (38) 'To say that the meaning of religious beliefs is partly dependent on non-religious facts is not to say that those beliefs are justified by, or could be inferred from, the facts in question.' (39) Or, to cite Mascal, what we see the world as 'is not something whose existence is **deduced from** that of the sensible phenomena, as Locke thought, nor is it something mentally **constructed out of** the sensible phenomena, as many modern empiricists have held, but something **grasped through** them.' (40) To a religious person the world, for all its empiricism and for all that it stands for in materialism, is a **religious** fact. This is how the religious believer sees the world. To give a precise example: some religious people believe that if Russia (pre-Soviet or Soviet) makes moves to bring the Middle East under its sphere of influence, and if, further, Egypt, as well as Israel, proves intractable and has eventually to be forced

by arms to cooperate, then all this is as it could be; it holds specifically religious meaning, for the situation is described in some detail by the prophets as direct action on the part of God himself. (41) And there seems to be no way in which we may satisfactorily distinguish between the 'world' and the language in which we attempt to describe that world, in order to be able to say that there is merely a **linguistic** difference; for the philosophical problem is that any 'world' we wish to portray can only be portrayed by that language.

Following and developing Popper, Bartley would seem to make it necessary to choose between:

either

1) religion is fundamentally irrational because it is based on commitment

or 2) if it is to any degree rational then it cannot be based on commitment but on a group of hypotheses (testable by Popper's formula). (42)

McPherson (43) rejects the 'hypothesis' principle, at least in so far as it is applied to the Christian religion. McPherson, rightly I think, argues that a person can take up a religious position after considerable critical thought. He can become committed when someone shows him that a certain belief follows logically from what he already believes. That is, he can change his commitment on rational grounds. This, therefore, is not an **arbitrary** commitment - the first view implied by Bartley. But McPherson's reaction is too strong in claiming that religion (even the Christian religion) cannot be held as **some** form of hypothesis. (44) If it is true that the **logical** status of a belief is such that the same proposition cannot be held, by the same person, 'both tentatively and firmly' (45) it is still the case that many of our beliefs are held **more or less** firmly. While a believer cannot, as Mitchell says '**treat** (his commitments) as hypotheses' it is still true that Christians, for example, are aware that they 'see through a glass darkly.' It appears quite possible for the rational man to hold religious beliefs in this way, for it is not nonsense to speak of a suspended doubt. As Mitchell says, a man has 'to live as if he had decided.' (46) And Hudson, further, observes 'As the scientist or historian discovers more, so the religious believer's thought of God may be enlarged.' (47)

John Wisdom (48) argued that when two people are looking at the same picture it is not a question of the facts when one of them says the picture is ugly and the other that it's beautiful. Their disagreement cannot be settled by reference to the 'facts'. The facts cannot decide the issue because they are all known to both viewers who still 'see' the picture differently. It may be true that if a picture tells its viewers something then it may be properly described, as John Casey has said, as 'a form of knowledge, but knowledge of something other than fact. Works of art do not provide us with new information.' (49) For Wisdom's viewers, there is a knowledge to be obtained from the picture but it does not consist of more factual information than that which both viewers can already see. Elliott says 'It may be that a work of art is precisely the kind of thing which calls for imaginal and personal response. One might say that that is its essence and life, and that the objectivist aesthetic extols not the work itself but its husk or corpse.' (50) The religious person might be inclined to say that the purely historical or 'scientific' observer (if such were possible) sees in the world only Elliott's 'corpse'.

It might be said, therefore, that, in seeing our 'picture' of the world, it is not just a question of whether we may see the facts in one way rather than another; for our view is not 'new information' as to the facts already presented but new knowledge. To recognize the painting as either ugly or beautiful is, in both cases, to know something more than the lines that are drawn. There is the possibility of settlement over Wisdom's picture. Although differences 'cannot be resolved ... by moving the picture but by talk perhaps.' (51)

Wisdom's 'talk' is similar to Wittgenstein's discussion on 'forms of life'. 'It is what human beings **say** that is true and false; and they agree in the **language** they use. This is not agreement in opinion but in form of life. If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also ... in judgments.' (52) The agreement through language in 'form of life' and 'judgments' is Wisdom's 'talk' by which fundamental differences in views of life may be reconciled. "'Form of life" is a unit that must be presupposed in order to make it possible for human beings to communicate at all ... Somewhere one has to put stop ... Forms of life ...

constitute the "bedrock". (53) If it is true that 'when Wisdom's account is over, we are still merely on the threshold of the Faith' it is also true that 'Wisdom delivers us from the mistakes of a positivism which insists on seeing religious beliefs as experimental hypotheses.' (54)

Wittgenstein is thought to have said: 'Suppose I went to somewhere like Lourdes in France. Suppose I went with a very credulous person. There we see blood coming out of something. He says: "There you are, Wittgenstein, how can you doubt?" I'd say: "Can it only be explained one way? Can't it be this or that?" I'd try to convince him that he'd seen nothing of any consequence.' (55) Wittgenstein's conclusion is suspect. Certainly a physical phenomenon may be explained in more than one way. But this is precisely the point. The 'credulous person' may well have 'seen' something of consequence which was quite beyond the 'facts' as they appeared to Wittgenstein, and this 'something' can only be determined by reference to the criteria by which it is judged. Wittgenstein might be correct to suspend his judgment as to what 'picture' of the world this might be to his credulous companion but it seems quite unjustifiable for Wittgenstein to attempt to convince him that 'he'd seen nothing of any consequence.' Wittgenstein might, as an alternative comment, have said: 'Oh, I see what you mean'; he might have cried 'Murder!' It is in the nature of this particular illustration that it can be used to show how we may read 'transcendence' (or 'beauty' etc.) into an empirical situation without either falling into contradiction or unreasonably demanding one sort of view of life rather than another. The 'facts' do not, contrary to common opinion, speak for themselves; they have a habit of remaining stubbornly silent.

The parallel I mentioned between Popper and Kuhn may now be extended to include some of the thoughts of Wittgenstein and Wisdom, as I have here indicated. It is also appropriate to connect their thinking on world views with the thinking of R.M. Hare, and in particular his account of the religious 'blik' since it is, argues Hare, 'very important to have the right blik' in coming to understand a particular view of the world. (56)

VII Objectivity

Taking an objective stance with regard to a religious view of the world is not simply to state that a particular view of the world must be held (a trivial-

ly true point) but to further state the kind of boundaries and controls within which our view of things must have its place and by means of which it may be opened to the critical appraisal of public testing. If this framework of controls is not made clear it is possible that any statement we make will be misunderstood. Put another way, anything we may find in Popper's world three and which we believe to be religiously significant must be taken out and placed in the spotlight of public scrutiny. This is to argue against a form of relativism which would deny the possibility of independent 'objective' assessment and, instead, claim that all knowledge is socially determined (what has been called a 'total paradigm') and quite arbitrary. What, then, could 'objectivity' mean in religion?

I have already indicated the sort of thing that can count as progress in religious knowledge. But progress implies a framework of previously accepted concepts within the particular form of knowledge under consideration since, as Pring (57) has pointed out, if the idea of 'standards' is to mean anything some kind of 'authority' must be recognized. For example, Kuhn's 'normal science' could not be known as such if certain general principles of a previously accepted paradigm were not already established. It is equally clear that 'objectivity' is not simply another word for 'truth', although, as we shall see, there is a conceptual link. It is not insignificant to note the similarities in the terms used by Kuhn to describe newly recognized 'paradigms' and Ian Ramsey's description of how the world may be 'discovered' to be religious. Ramsey uses 'odd', 'discernment', 'disclosure', 'light dawns', 'penny drops', 'ice breaks', and 'gestalt'. Kuhn uses 'gestalt', 'scales falling from the eyes', 'lightning flash', 'inundates' and 'ducks seen as rabbits'. The paradigmatic changes described in these terms will remain 'odd' to everyone else; they will remain 'subjective' even esoteric and seem somewhat arbitrary to others until sufficient authoritative and public examination has been made to justify their being pronounced 'correct.' In this way the phenomenon will be seen as 'objective' rather than merely subjective or odd or 'socially determined'. What we have thus identified here is that the basis for objectivity lies in the notion of **agreement**. I shall distinguish between 'agreement' and 'assent'. By 'assent' I mean the uncritical acceptance by one person (or group of people) of what is proposed by another. By 'agreement' I mean acceptance of a proposal or state of affairs only after critical consideration. History has shown that 'assent' may be given by the majority of a country's

population to government measures with which, if all the circumstances and possible ramifications had been thoroughly examined, the population may not have 'agreed'. Parallel situations occur on different levels of social life and in board-rooms and trade-union meetings. The dictionary lends some support to the distinction by talking of 'understanding' in connection with 'agreement'.

Thus the basis for objectivity lies within the kind of agreement which involves an appropriate understanding of the issues; it has application in situations where critical judgment in relation to a knowledge of the relevant circumstances on the part of those agreeing has played a major role. In his discussion of what it means to 'make a mistake' Winch makes a comment relevant to the notion of knowledge by agreement. 'Establishing a standard is not an activity which it makes sense to ascribe to any individual in complete isolation from other individuals. For it is contact with other individuals which alone makes possible the external check on one's actions which is inseparable from an established standard.' (58) This is presumably what Wittgenstein meant when he used the phrase (with regard to the idea 'truth') that it is 'agreement in form of life.' (59) One corollary of this is that objectivity is not simply and necessarily to be derived from a democratic vote. What objectivity does imply is that those within the 'agreement' situation must have an understanding of what the subject under consideration is and therefore some idea of what it might mean to progress in knowledge in that situation. There is, then, a connection between objectivity, understanding and meaning. This connection may be seen to consist in the fact that we hold relevant concepts, expressed in language, in common. Much of this is implied in Wittgenstein's notion 'following a rule' and the point I wish to make here is that since following a rule is the activity of a communal language and depends for its meaning on the way a language game is played in a given social context, we may come to know what the religious language game is by paying attention to the way it is played. We shall learn what can be said and what can not be said, and we can know what it is like to make progress in the game. The only way we can communicate significantly, intelligibly, with one another is through shared views of what the world is like, hence the point made by Phillips 'Religious language ... determines how things are for the believer. The saint and the atheist do not interpret the same world in different ways. They see different worlds.' (60) This is strikingly paralleled by the 'gestalt' analogy used by both Ramsey and Kuhn; where one observer will see 'no more than two squares with corners joined'

and another, when 'the light dawns', will see a cube. (61) Thus whatever may be regarded as objective must also be 'understood' or 'have meaning' for others by means of commonly held concepts expressed in public language. However, it is clear that a theory or idea which aspires to objectivity, especially in highly complicated forms of knowledge, cannot always be held up for independent assessment by people 'in general'. The question of competence in judgment must also be considered. And, notwithstanding the difficulties, some form of Popper's principle 'error elimination' must be observed if knowledge is to progress -whatever the form of knowledge involved. 'All testing' says Wittgenstein 'all confirmation and disconfirmation of a hypothesis takes place already within a system. And this system is not a more or less arbitrary and doubtful point of departure for all our arguments: no, it belongs to the essence of what we call an argument. The system is not so much the point of departure, as the element in which arguments have their life.' (62) There are those who would object to what appears to be structural systems in ordinary language having the ability of self-authentication. Where is the **objectivity**? they would ask. And in asking, portray the mind of the ancient religious believer who, wishing to find a 'real' foundation for the physical world, invented the theory that the world rode on the back of an elephant which, in turn, stood on four giant turtles. We are left to imagine what the turtles might stand on. In ordinary language games is it appropriate to ask for such elusive 'objectivity'? Holland criticizes Hirst's and Peters' approach to philosophy in so far as they "'locate the criteria of knowledge and truth within the disciplines".'

He goes on '(The disciplines of knowledge) have their different procedures. That is one point, and another is that the responsibility for maintaining standards lies with the practitioners - if **they** do not uphold whatever is best in the traditions of their subject no one else can. But if thirdly it is suggested that the disciplines are more or less immune against influences from outside then this is false.' (63)

I don't know what Hirst and Peters would reply to this, but it seems to me that the growth of knowledge ('language games' if you will) is precisely of this kind. It is both immune and not immune to 'influences from outside.' It is immune, to a large extent, from the ideas of those who cannot 'agree in judgment', the agreement situation. (This applies across the board, to mathematics, art, music, religion science and so on; for outsiders simply lack characteristics I have already described such as understanding and expertise.) Yet the development of objective knowledge is also not immune in the way suggested

by Holland, for Kuhn's new paradigms and the inhabitants of Popper's world three may, though it does not often occur, be discovered by the dilettante or the untrained mind. Has man's knowledge ever been based on more than his own artifice, his collective consensus of those who 'agree in judgments'? 'No, **experience** is not the ground for our game of judging.' (64) Of course one could continue to argue: But there **must** be an external check for objective knowledge. Suppose there is. Suppose you discovered it. How would **that** satisfy us?

If a given system of concepts and ideas we have about the world is not to float like hopelessly unanchorable flotsam on a sea of sheer, subjective opinion, then it may be said that some combination of the elements I have mentioned must be sought in order to give validity to the system. These are: I) shared views of the particular system of concepts under consideration which are II) understood and have meaning for those who share the concepts. This will involve III) the question of competence to independently judge the system, and will be IV) expressed in a common language. Basil Mitchell observes 'There is an essential role for trained judgement in all these rational activities, not least when a choice has to be made between conceptual systems.' (65)

It seems to follow that if 'truth' is to be found in any view of the world then the only way we have of identifying it as true is by way of publicly agreed objective judgments. It seems that while objectivity cannot be identified with 'truth' there is an intimate connection between them. Hamlyn points out 'inter-subjective agreement acts as a kind of linking-point between truth and understanding. For understanding what we mean presupposes agreement on the application of our terms at certain points, and agreement equally constitutes the criterion of the concept of truth.' (66) I have already made the point that what we 'discern' of the world (what we 'see' in Wisdom's picture) is precisely what the world is for us; it is what we can be said to know of the world. But if we are not to fall into solipsism then criteria for 'what is the case' in our repertoire of knowledge will be similar to the criteria for objectivity; it may be settled 'by talk perhaps.'

This, then, is the kind of anchor there must be for objective knowledge in religious discourse. It constitutes an argument for the 'objective tests' by which a claim to validity can be made for knowledge in religion, as required by Hirst's 'forms of knowledge' analysis discussed below. It may be summarised, for religion, in the words of Phillips 'What is said about suffering and death' (in his previously given examples) 'can be judged in terms of what we already

know. What is said falls under standards of judgment with which we are already acquainted. When what is said by religious believers does violate the facts or distort our apprehension of situations, no appeal to the fact that what is said is said in the name of religion can justify or excuse the violation and distortion.' (67) And what Mitchell says of Kuhn's paradigm shifts in science may be said also of rationality and objectivity in religious thinking 'there is no reason to doubt that choices made with care and competence on the basis of (the criteria of each paradigm) are rational. And the same may be said **mutatis mutandis** of world-views or metaphysical systems.' (68)

As I have indicated, the form of knowledge within religion cannot be seen in the context of the simplistic notion of the 'subjective believer', but must, rather, be open to public scrutiny. Among other things in an educational context this means that believer and non-believer alike must be able in principle to judge the 'truth' content of a religious statement. Since, as I have argued, the validation of propositions (and therefore of religious statements) is to be identified in publicly shared concepts, then the philosopher's work in conceptual analysis becomes of crucial importance. This is the sort of consideration that makes religion rationally, unremarkably acceptable on a school curriculum that purports to offer a liberal education.

Having argued that the teaching of religion in schools must, to be consistent with other subjects taught, be concerned with a state of knowledge and not with private feelings, inclinations, experiences, superstitions or commitments, we should now be in a position to discern the sort of opposition that may be offered to the hoary questions about the grounds on which we might logically exclude subjects like 'magic' and 'astrology.' For while they may, conceivably, continue to be regarded as 'world views' there is little or no reason to suppose that magic and astrology constitute a **religious** view of the world. And this point will be even more easily seen when we come to discuss the sort of concepts it is appropriate to recognize (and therefore teach) in religion.

VIII Distinctions and contours in religious knowledge

I have so far indicated in a general way that the teaching and learning of certain concepts lies at the heart of the educational process. In the present chapter I have briefly outlined the kind of thinking by means of which we may justify our claim to know something and to show how religion in particular

may be thought of as an area of knowledge among other forms of knowledge - another 'voice in the conversation of mankind.' If it can be agreed that religion has a legitimate claim to knowledge by means of certain truth criteria; and if it be further agreed that this religious knowledge is to be taught, in the educational process, by means of its central concepts, then it would seem necessary to be somewhat more precise on what might constitute 'religious concepts' as opposed to those within other areas of knowledge. For education has been construed as a process of discrimination by which students may come to recognize different forms of human experience. It would not, after all, be appropriate in education to set out to teach concepts which we believe to be central to, say, a knowledge of history, and reach the end of the course having taught only moral judgments. The point here is not that a study of some moral judgments is not in fact intertwined with history; it is, rather, that if we do not recognize where the line is to be drawn between them we may never arrive at our educational objective, which is 'historical knowledge' (except by accident or by simply saturating students with information which just happens to cover the target, an example which lends substance to the common notion that students learn 'in spite of' their teachers). Religious education and moral education are constantly confused for this reason. Many a teacher will have concluded with a moral injunction (e.g. 'X ought to be done', or 'therefore we ought not to steal') a lesson that they had believed to be on religion. What we seek, in the interests of educational clarity is an underlying rationale whereby we may recognize distinctions within experience if what is the case in any particular area is to become known and understood.

In order to focus more precisely on the question of religion as a school curriculum subject, an **educational** topic, it is appropriate here to consider one of the best known contemporary accounts of the epistemological basis for the school curriculum, that of Paul Hirst. (69) Because it is a much published thesis I shall not go into considerable explanatory depths but shall simply outline Hirst's thesis and draw out from it those implications which are directly relevant to a more complete account of religious knowledge. The result of this should show that religion has distinctive boundaries which will not allow it to be reduced to any other area of knowledge, and that its complex, internal structure is cohesive and intelligible. Hirst wishes to consider the grounds on which might be based a 'liberal' education, and construes a liberal education as one which has breadth and which, at the same time, limits that breadth to certain logically defined 'forms of knowledge'. A student who comes to know the contents of

those forms is, according to Hirst, liberally educated. Hirst sees it necessary, therefore, to establish criteria by which those 'forms' may be identified. That done, contents to be taught will be relatively well marked out. The teacher's problems after that will be those of selection of material, determined by the criteria for the specific 'form' being taught, and the teaching methods to be used.

Hirst's thesis does not contradict the idea of 'world views' discussed earlier. The two things are complementary. Given that we hold a world view; that we 'agree' on a 'form of life' what, more precisely, are those elements we agree upon? What elements, we might ask, necessarily constitute a common understanding? The 'penny' having dropped, the 'light' having dawned, the new paradigm having been recognized, what elements must we be agreed upon in order to make common sense of the phenomenon; in order to confer within the same language game? These are questions that are to be posed by the teacher, *qua* educator, to students who are being brought to the threshold of various experiences and who are being brought to understand different world views. They constitute, one might say, the precise nature of the teacher's task. That a student must, sooner or later, see the world in one way rather than another does not prevent him - or anyone else - from understanding what others hold to be different world views. I have already argued that it does not seem impossible for a non-communist to understand communism and there seems to be no logical reason why this should not apply right across the board.

Hirst's thesis, then, purports to describe the world of experience as it actually exists; he portrays it in terms of the concepts and propositions of a public language which are 'testable' by those who use that language. If some of the terms he uses (e.g. 'category' and 'form') seem to reflect 'the status of Kantian *a priori* categories' or 'Platonic "Forms"' then this is purely 'superficial', says Hirst. 'The conceptual and logical analysis which indicates the divisions I have stressed is a matter of the logical relations and truth criteria to be found at present in our conceptual schemes.' (70) Such an analysis does not destroy the notion of 'conversation'; it is, rather, an extension of it. For Hirst's forms of knowledge' are not fixed in any Platonic sense. They are capable of development in principle. To cite Hirst again:

'It is not my view that in elucidating the fundamental categories of our understanding we reach an unchanging

structure that is implicit, indeed **a priori**, in all rational thought in all times and places. That there exist any elements in thought that can be known to be immune to change, making transcendental demands on us, I do not accept. I see no grounds for accepting that being rational in any sphere is a matter of adherence to a set of principles that are of their character invariant, nor do I see why formal systems of relations of a mathematical kind should be regarded as providing any necessary ideal of rationality against which all other forms must be assessed. Being rational I see rather as a matter of developing conceptual schemes by means of public language in which words are related to our form of life, so that we make objective judgments in relation to some aspect of that form of life.' (71)

Hirst distinguishes some seven 'forms of knowledge'. In his first list they appear as: 'mathematics, physical sciences, human sciences, history, religion, literature and the fine arts, philosophy.' (72) Hirst includes moral knowledge in a later list. (73) On further analysis Hirst takes out human sciences and history and replaces them with 'truths of a mental or personal kind.' (74) The forms of knowledge Hirst now distinguishes are, mathematics, physical science, morality, literature and the fine arts, philosophy, inter-personal (or 'mental') knowledge and religion. The variations are attributable to the difficulty of establishing criteria of truth by which we may distinguish history as a separate form and the social sciences as a separate form, for, in the nature of these areas of man's experience, their testability criteria are ambiguous. How far, for example, is history to be explained by purely empirical means and how far may it be explained by reference to man's 'intentions' will' hopes' beliefs' etc?' (75) 'The labels that I have used for distinct forms of knowledge' says Hirst 'are to be understood as being strictly labels for different classes of true propositions.' (76) Hirst adds 'That other domains might, in due course, come to be distinguished, is in no sense being prejudged; for the history of human consciousness would seem to be one of progressive differentiation. The categorization that is at present being suggested may in fact be inaccurate in detail. Be that as it may. What we are suggesting is that within the domain of objective experience and knowledge, there are such radical differences of kind that experience and knowledge of one form is neither equatable with, nor reducible to, that of any other form.' (77) Hirst gives precise examples of what might commonly be thought to constitute concepts peculiar to the forms he distinguishes, that is to say, those concepts not reducible to any of

the other forms. 'Those of gravity, acceleration, hydrogen and photo-synthesis characteristic of the sciences; number, integral and matrix in mathematics; God, sin and predestination in religion; ought, good and wrong in moral knowledge.' (78)

The distinctive character of the various forms of knowledge is determined by I) certain concepts unique to the form and not reducible to any other form (I shall, as Hirst does, refer to these as 'categorical concepts'), II) 'these and other concepts that denote, if perhaps in a very complex way, certain aspects of experience, form a network of possible relationships in which experience can be understood.' (79) (Following Brent (80) I shall refer to the 'other concepts' as 'substantive concepts'), and III) objective tests peculiar to the form and by which its statements can be validated against experience as truth claims.

It might be helpful to glance at one of the objections that have been raised against the validation criterion in Hirst's thesis in order to highlight Hirst's requirement of the necessity for the validation of truth claims and his recognition of the variety of ways in which this may be done. (81) Hirst has said 'The form (of knowledge) ... has expressions or statements ... that in some way or other ... are testable against experience.' (82) Woods and Barrow comment that the phrase 'against experience' is 'hopelessly vague' on the grounds that, for instance 'mathematics simply does not make use of **any** kind of "test against experience" in any sense that I can give to that expression.' (83) They make the same charge against Hirst with regard to religion, morals and literature and the fine arts. Yet Hirst expressly states 'It is my desire to keep open this possibility' (that the terms 'truth' and 'knowledge' can be used of the arts as well as mathematics and science) 'that has led me to talk sometimes of "truth criteria", sometimes of "validity", sometimes of "objective tests" and sometimes of "testable against experience". Nothing in my purpose turns on using any one of these phrases rather than another. I am in each case simply referring to tests that have the logical function that truth tests have for propositions.' And 'recent consideration of the concept of truth is centrally a demand for objective judgment, and there is nothing to be gained by restricting it to one particular form of such judgment.' (84)

I shall accept that Hirst's criteria for identifying a form of knowledge satisfy my search for distinctions and contours in religious knowledge. We have already discussed some of the ways in which a knowledge of religion may be 'validated' against experience. It remains to be shown more precisely the way

Hirst's notion of logically necessary concepts in religion may be worked out and the implications these may have for RE.

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THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE IN EDUCATION

I Reasonable grounds for agreement on the nature of RE

Before looking more closely at some of the implications Hirst's religious form of knowledge holds for education, let us cast an eye at what might appear to some as an obstacle in attempts to clarify the nature of the subject. It is considered by some that 'religion' has so many different meanings as to defy precise characterisation. It may be argued that for any so called definition of religion presented it would always be possible to make the rejoinder: That is what religion means to you; but I think religion is something quite different.

We may observe at once that this statement already admits that there is at least something distinctive about religion, otherwise it could not be a serious claim to hold a different view of religion. The objector will have reasons for his claim to hold a different view; he will have, at least by implication, criteria by which his view can be distinguished. But it is precisely because there exist criteria for determining how best religion may be characterised that there is the possibility of agreement. What may make such an agreement **difficult** - but not impossible - is the vagueness of the views held. It will only be possible to **always** object to a certain characterisation if we do not begin the dialogue that may lead to agreement in characterisation. The notions of 'history' and of 'ethics', too, are difficult to characterise with any precision, but would we wish to say that history and ethics **defy** characterisation and there's an end to't?

It should be said at this point that I am not, here, concerned to analyse all possible forms of religious phenomena; I do not intend this thesis to be understood as a treatise in the psychology, the sociology or even the philosophy of religion as this is traditionally conceived, but as an examination of what we may seriously consider to be the nature of religion in popular education in a secular society and in keeping with the ordinary canons and standards of knowledge when religion is favourably compared with other school subjects. It is not, therefore, appropriate to examine the theses of, say, Rudolf Otto or Kierkegaard etc. By the same token it is not appropriate to engage in detailed assessment of borderline phenomena in, say religious experience, mysticism or the many areas of doubtful private experience. We must freely admit - and so must

the RE teacher - that despite the possibility of general agreement the notion 'religion' is amorphous, blurred at the edges, and in this way similar to the notions of ethics or art. It is not at all unreasonable to assert, however, that, like ethics and art, there is something distinctive about the realm of religion. And if we were to find agreement in important respects then the resultant characterisation of religion would inevitably lead to the **exclusion** of other forms of experience. The RE teacher's objectives would at once improve in focus. William James has observed: 'At their extreme of development, there can never be any question as to what experiences are religious ... Hesitation as to whether a state of mind is "religious", or "irreligious", or "moral", or "philosophical", is only likely to arise when the state of mind is weakly characterised, but in that case it will be hardly worthy of our study at all ... We learn most about a thing when we view it under a microscope, as it were, or in its most exaggerated form.' (1)

On this view it would be pedantic to insist upon or to deny ascriptions of titles to borderline cases such as Theravada Buddhism or to Stoicism. Such problematic areas become, very often for the teacher of RE, topics for debate in the higher forms of the school related to, perhaps even identified by, previously agreed public concepts - religion in its 'exaggerated form.' But difficulties of this kind have never yet prevented philosophical discussion. And this is precisely the point. In the present state of our publicly shared concepts, what, indeed, may be clearly identified - and therefore taught in schools - as 'religion.'? How do we in fact relate purportedly religious statements to one another? If it is pedantic to deny the name 'religion' to ambiguous cases it is surely blindness to the use of language to assert that no clear religious statements can be made. And clarity is not assured by those who say that **any** 'total' view of life, any 'commitment' to the deepest thoughts and most profound behaviour of a person, can be described as 'religious.' 'So very broad a use of the word "religion"' says James, 'would be inconvenient, however defensible it might remain on logical grounds. There are trifling, sneering attitudes even towards the whole of life; and in some men these attitudes are final and systematic. It would strain the ordinary use of language too much to call such attitudes religious, even though, from the point of view of an unbiased critical philosophy, they might conceivably be perfectly reasonable ways of looking upon life.' (2)

II Substantive and categorial concepts

Let us say, then, that Hirst's analysis of the forms of knowledge required in a liberal education may be used by the teacher as a coherent and intelligible starting point for marking out in a fairly precise way the boundaries of religion as a school subject. In this way we are given a chance to apply clearly rational procedures to a subject that is notoriously 'woolly' in its educational conception and representation.

The categorial concepts, according to Hirst, 'provide the form of experience in the different modes' (3), while the substantive concepts give substance to, or fill out, the distinctive area of a mode of experience. But substantive concepts, while necessary to the form as a whole (since they are, within the distinctive form, what we most often directly experience in the world), are dependent upon the categorial concepts for their distinctiveness as part of the form. For example, in the religious form of knowledge, of the concepts 'God', 'the transcendent' and 'grace' we would pick out 'grace' as a substantive concept for it denotes a significant and recognizable religious experience but does not **determine** the form of religious knowledge. We may say that 'grace' constitutes part of the **content** - the internal complexity - of the form. Only in relation to the concepts 'God' and 'the transcendent' can 'grace' be categorized as part of the religious domain of knowledge. It may be supposed, therefore, that 'God' and 'the transcendent' are categorial concepts which mark out religion as a distinctive form of knowledge. The concept 'grace' **presupposes** the categorial concepts. Although, indeed, it may be **through** an experience of the substantive concept 'grace' that one may validate the categorial concept 'God': 'the specific forms the tests take' says Hirst 'may depend on the lower level (substantive) concepts employed.' (4) Together, the categorial and the substantive concepts of the religious form of knowledge will constitute, we may say, concepts central to the content of RE. Because of the significance these concepts assume in RE it is appropriate to examine more closely what the categorial concepts of religion might be and, in doing so, go some way towards a grasp of the relationship between the categorial and substantive concepts in the religious form of knowledge.

Some study of the major world religions shows marked differences between them in areas such as ritual, doctrine and organization. One might mention Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, forms of Buddhism and animism. One

item they hold in common, however, is a belief in some form of 'transcendence' or 'God', where this is taken to mean something like a supernatural, 'spiritual' force or 'state' determining the lives of men and often focussed in a 'being' or 'beings' describable in anthropomorphic terms. What is significant about the concept 'transcendence', for present purposes, is not merely its commonality but the way in which it binds together all the other aspects of a given religion. For example, much of Hindu ritual (and therefore much of the organization of thought and practice in Hinduism) becomes meaningful only in relation to its various forms of deity. To take a specific example: it is determined by the injunctions of Lord Krishna 'For the man who forsakes all desires and abandons all pride of possession and of self reaches the goal of peace supreme. This is the eternal in man.' (5) It may be noted that 'ritual' is sometimes indistinguishable from everyday 'secular' practical life' in Hinduism; 'a vast majority of the economically poor Hindus approach God through traditional simple methods using the ways of devotion (bhakti) and of performances (karma) rather than the path of pure knowledge (jnana).' (6) There is, incidentally, a clear parallel with Christian practice here. For many Christians throughout the world 'religion' is not at all intellectual but practised in distinctive forms of devotion in church rituals and attitudes towards other people. The words of James' epistle would appear to suffice for justification: 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.' Notwithstanding this, such practise would be regarded as meaningless without implicit or explicit reference to God. In Hudson's words 'The concept of god determines what in religious belief constitutes (a) an **explanation** and (b) an **experience**.' (7) The concept 'God' determines, in a similar manner, all religious thought and practice in Islam. So, too, with other religions.

I shall take it, then, that the concepts 'God' and 'transcendence' constitute the categorial concepts in the religious form of knowledge; all other concepts connected to religion are substantive concepts and depend for their specifically religious meaning on the categorial concepts. In order to bring out this relationship more clearly let us look briefly at some of these substantive concepts with special reference to Christianity. Besides the concept 'God', Hirst, for example, mentions 'sin and predestination' and in his critique of Hirst's theory Brent picks out 'sin', as well as God and the transcendent, (8) as categorial concepts. In what sense could 'sin' be regarded as categorial? The scriptures and Christian tradition are quite clear in its use: 'sin' means breaking

God's law; the state of 'sin' is the human condition of being alienated from God. There is no obvious sense in which it could be claimed that 'sin' determines what religion is. 'Sin' denotes an act or a human habitude **towards** God. Indeed, as it was argued by Paul, 'sin' is unrecognizable without some previous awareness of God and his law. (9) Moreover, there is a perfectly secular meaning applicable to the New Testament word 'sin' (hamartia), for the term could mean something like 'breaking the law of the land.' As a distinctively religious term it depends upon the concept 'God' for its peculiar significance. Similarly with 'predestination', it is difficult to conceive of its independence from the concept 'God' within the context of the Christian religion for 'predestination' presupposes the power and will of God in the sense of there being something determined by God in a conscious and designed act of will. The concepts 'sacrifice', 'baptism' and 'salvation' all presuppose the concept 'God', for statements concerning these concepts imply notions such as sacrifice **to** God, baptism **in the name of** the lord and salvation **wrought by** God. Thus 'sin' , 'predestination', 'sacrifice', 'baptism' and 'salvation'; concepts such as 'ritual', 'worship', 'resurrection', 'paradise', 'the day of judgment' and a host of others are substantive concepts in that they presuppose the concept 'God.' We may say, therefore, that the concepts 'God' and 'the transcendent' are the categorial concepts in religion. Whatever state of affairs is called 'religion' and contains no concept of transcendence and no terms which necessarily presuppose transcendence is, I suggest, ultimately incoherent. And any concept which does not necessarily presuppose the transcendent is reducible to one of the other forms of knowledge. As Hudson claims of Wittgenstein's 'pictures', 'The fundamental pictures in the case of religion are ... pictures of god; that is, they express some aspect of transcendent consciousness and agency.' (10) A comment by Brent is illuminating: 'consider what will happen if the modern attempts of the "death of God" school of theology at categorial revision are successful and a coherent and recognisable system of **religious** knowledge and experience is produced in which the concept of God is redundant. The structure of the religious form of knowledge as a whole will be transformed by altering the categorial concept of God.' (11) We may say, therefore, that the categorial concept 'God' together with its substantive concepts form the content of knowledge in the Christian religion. This is one of the reasons why the bible is so significant to a study of Judaism and Christianity for it is a major source of substantive concepts all dependent upon, and shaped by, the categorial concept of transcendence. The bible **uses** history to depict

God; a secular bible is a contradiction in terms. And this general argument holds good for the Qur'an in Islam and for oral and written traditions in other religions.

III Further considerations of the categorial concepts

The notion of 'the transcendent' which in most western religions is applied to 'God' may also be interpreted to include non-theistic Buddhism. We may say, without stretching common usage of the term, that 'transcendence' does not necessarily involve a god or divine/human relationship but does necessarily involve a believer's recognition of a **superhuman**/human connection. The transcendent notion 'nirvana' in Theravada Buddhism, like 'god' in other religions, determines all that one is to think and do in that religion (whether nirvana is conceived as an 'internal' or 'external' state) by means of the Eightfold Path through which nirvana may be achieved. And the recognisable experiences that arise as a result of following the Path will constitute the substantive concepts by which nirvana is to be recognized and realized. (E.g. 'Nirvana' requires the believer to follow the path to the cessation of pain. The believer, therefore, conceives the path to the cessation of pain as a manifestation of the transcendent nirvana, just as the Christian conceives 'grace' or the rite of baptism as experiences of God.) There would seem to be no serious objection to the use of both 'God' and 'transcendence' as categorial concepts by which religious phenomena may be redognized, for this is how religion is, in fact, widely conceived. I would therefore use 'transcendence' in the quite unoriginal sense that may be reserved for the "'beyondness or 'otherness' of God' as described by H.D. Lewis (12), and for the 'beyondness' or 'otherness' as this is conceivably attributed to nirvana. This way of speaking is not exceptional in talk of religion. Ninian Smart, for example, indicates ways in which we may compare the transcendent in Buddhism with the transcendent in theistic religions. (13)

It is important, however, to comment on two possible and connected objections. First, how can religion, characterised by the notion of transcendence, be prevented from degeneration? Second, what forms of experience do we in fact **exclude** by such a characterisation? or, more pertinently, what sort of areas in RE ought to be excluded if such a characterisation were accepted? We may make the following observations. Although the notion of transcendence, interpreted as a superhuman/human relationship, might be loosely and perhaps

justifiably extended to more common ideas of the 'supernatural' we are prevented from accepting belief in extraordinary notions such as leprechauns and mundane superstitions by our 'agreement' criteria already discussed. We are saved from the ridiculous by our common understanding of what each religious tradition will reasonably allow. Christianity reasonably allowed the development - the recognition, if you will - of the doctrine of the Trinity, culled from its earlier traditions. Buddhism allowed the recognition and development of **karma**, and even worship of the Buddha. By and large in world religions there are in fact rationally based restrictions on the notion of religious transcendence so that religion does not dissolve into mundane forms of superstition.

On the other hand religion, centrally characterised by the notion of transcendence, would appear to exclude forms of experience that have their origins and aspirations in the wholly human. The phenomena most relevant to RE include communism, fascism and a variety of social organizations and norms. Such experiences must be considered from the point of view of their stated origins and objectives, just as in coming to understand a religion that is not one's own one must get to grips with the way the believer sees it; this is what is meant when it is said that we must take the phenomenon **seriously**. We must try not to re-fashion the experience of others in our own image. (Which is why we wish to reject, say, a Christian's view which would reinterpret Theravada Buddhism as just another way of reaching the Christian God.) To argue, as some might, that there is a 'mystique' permeating the theories of, for example, Marxism and National Socialism, that could be described as 'transcendent', would mean that we are not taking communism and fascism seriously; for communism and fascism claim to be firmly identified with and guided by testable theories arising solely from the human consciousness of the nature of man and his social and physical environment. (This is not to say that Marxism, for e.g. cannot in the future develop into a religion.) A similar problem arises for those teachers of religion who include in their syllabuses secular social organizations such as the Welfare State and trades unions. In what ways can these forms of experience be connected to the notion of religion as this is characterised by transcendence? We shall consider in more detail in the next chapter the implications for some typical RE syllabuses of religion as it has been characterised here.

Meanwhile, it is possible to argue that, as Wittgenstein might have put it, a religious form of life is constructed out of our agreement on the con-

cept of transcendence. To reduce this concept to something else that can be conceived as non-transcendent is not merely to disagree in this form of life; it is to claim that no such form exists; and this would be another way of saying that we have a different view of Wisdom's picture, albeit one that is more conceivable than conceived in present human experience. Following Oakeshott and Hirst, then, I take religion to be another 'voice in the conversation of mankind'. The task of the religious educator is to introduce students to that voice and its literature. The 'grammar' of the voice is devotion to the notions of God and the transcendent, and the voice will not be clear without the use of this grammar.

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Chapter Eight

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF SOME CONTEMPORARY VIEWS IN RE

I Introduction

In the preceding pages I have tried to show that by certain philosophical methods a distinctive rationale and structure can be provided for the teaching of religion in schools. Why is this thought to be necessary? The two main reasons arise in the complex nature of education, and in the nature of religious knowledge. Both aspects require some analytic consideration, such as I have attempted to provide, if we are to get clear on fundamental issues in RE.

A third and more immediate reason for a philosophical examination of the teaching of religion in schools arises because of the effects of the **lack** of a sound and coherent theory in the formulation of procedures and content. Interesting consequences have followed from this want of philosophical analysis in state authorities. In the first place, the teaching of religion, as such, is not allowed in the state schools of the U.S.A., and we have seen the underlying inadequacy in attempts to legalise certain aspects of religious teaching in that country. At the time of writing court cases in at least two States are attempting to grapple with the claim that the biblical story of the creation is not 'religion' but, like Darwin's theory of evolution, is science: 'creation science.' Interesting though the discussions might be in these cases there is no reason to think that legal procedures can solve any of the fundamental issues involved. Sweden in the recent past has taken the idea of teaching 'about' religion seriously in an effort to show impartiality in a secular society, and the word 'about' stands

in bold print in, for example **Läroplan för gymnasieskolan** (Syllabus for gymnasium schools), Supplement 11, 1970, p.301. But the questions raised in chapter five concerning the use of this word apply here, too. Moreover, the Swedish syllabuses, together with journals such as **RE Aktuellt** (information for teachers of religion, published by the School of Education in Umeå) appear to be in difficulty in distinguishing between concepts such as 'religion', 'life stances' (livs-åskådningar) and 'ethics'. (1) Perhaps the most bizarre RE situation is the one found in England and Wales where 'Religious Instruction' is not only required by law (1944 Education Act); it is the **only** subject specifically required by law to be taught and, at the same time, the only subject a parent can claim exemption from for this child. It is appropriate to probe further some of the more prominent statements and theories within RE that have been produced in recent years. Although I have paid special attention to theories in Britain many of the issues are just as pertinent to the teaching of religion in other western countries.

Over the past twenty years or so there has been a shift in emphasis away from teaching Christianity and the traditional religions towards the teaching of 'life stances', moral issues, social problems, political systems and so on. Why have such changes come about? John Wilson and Ninian Smart have both elaborated theses that appear to have influenced - or, at the very least, to have reflected - such elements in contemporary syllabuses.

II RE via the emotions?

John Wilson, apparently rejecting a straightforward Braithwaiteian reduction of religion to morality, makes out a case for the claim that religion arises from the emotions which, in turn, is part of the field of moral knowledge. Emotions, argues Wilson, are connected to morality in the sense that 'morals' concerns not only what people should **do** (behaviour) but also what people should **feel** (emotions). In moral education, Wilson says 'We should want to assess people, not only by the kinds of reasons that motivate them, but by their general attitudes, feelings and dispositions; that is, not only by what they **do** (even if we include the reasons they have for doing it), but also by what they **feel**.' (2)

From his list of 'moral components' by which we can identify the morally educated person Wilson emphasises an 'ability', the 'awareness of one's emotions' (EMP 1), 'awareness of others' emotions' (EMP 2), (3) This leads Wilson directly to religion for 'the notions of awe, worship, and reverence are perhaps **particularly** characteristic of the religious attitude.' It follows 'that it is not the type of **object**, but the type of attitude, which defines the activity we want to call "religious."' (p. 42, Wilson's emphasis throughout) Since moral education involves education the emotions, and since certain of these emotions characterise religion, RE falls within the wider sphere of moral education. This, then, is the nature of the connection between 'religion' and 'morality', for Wilson. It could be argued that this connection does not result in reducing religion to morals because, first, in Wilson's view, there are '**some** uses of "religion" which are not conceptually tied to awe and worship at all. Thus Buddhism, certain kinds of Hinduism, and more novel movements such as Subud have perhaps very little to do with awe or worship: yet they are called "religions."' (p.66) Secondly, religion, for Wilson, clearly has a dual character in that while RE involves the teaching of those moral attitudes which have to do with the emotions, it does not deny to religion some form of transcendent origin based on statements of fact, not judgment. 'Worship', after all, has to do with an object towards which it is directed. 'Religion is **centrally** concerned with questions about the appropriateness of various objects of awe and worship, and with other human emotions.' (p.164) Thirdly, by teaching the appropriate emotions only it is possible to 'elucidate a type of activity and belief which is **sui generis**, and cannot be assimilated to other activities, for example explaining, making moral judgements, stating historical facts and so forth.' (p.66)

Since it is by means of the appropriate 'moral components' (e.g. PHIL, EMP, GIG and KRAT, cf.p.163) that RE finds its logic it is to be expected that the RE teacher need not confine 'his attention solely to those emotions, ideals or "outlooks" that may properly be called "religious".' 'Religious outlooks are only one sub-class of emotion-based outlooks in general. We must include not only near-religions, like Communism or the Nazi movement, but (for instance) ideals like the ideal of "honour" (not losing face), or "Stoic" ideals of nobility and self-sacrifice, or "Epicurean" ideals concerned with pleasure and a quiet life.' (pp.165-166)

RE, then, in the main, is a sub-species of the education of the emotions and of moral education, according to Wilson. 'It is not or not primarily, instruction in creeds, dogmas, sacred writings, history, literature, psychology, sociology or any of the other areas that have attached themselves to such emotions.' (p.186) Writing a few years later we find Wilson emphasizing two important issues. The first is that of identification. At what point, he asks, do certain mundane attitudes become **sui generis** religious attitudes? 'We should be more inclined to describe Communism or Marxism as a religion the more that Communists and Marxists saw and described Lenin (or Marx, or whoever) not just as in a high degree important or admirable or outstanding, but as some kind of **god** - and "god" implies "something to be worshipped".' (4) The second issue emphasized is the 'emotional investment' that lies at the core of religion. 'To **see** and feel Christ (Hitler, Poseidon, Nature, or whatever) **as god** - this element is central.' Mere history turns into religion when we go beyond the facts of the life of Jesus and portray him as 'divine ... As soon as any specifically religious term is used - "god", "supernatural", "divine" and many others - we have to face the question of whether the attitude which these words incorporate is **appropriate**.' A person 'must be open to, or be able actually to feel, the emotions and attitudes which he might then want to invest or adopt.' (5)

We have a right to be confused about Wilson's account of religion and of its place in education. Does he or does he not reduce religion to morality on the grounds that religious people express emotions? Is Wilson seriously saying that if emotion is expressed over an experience then such experience is to be understood in terms of the emotions? We must therefore press the question: In virtue of which of these views is religion to be seen as **sui generis**? Is religion logically linked to 'specifically religious' terms like 'god', 'supernatural' and

so on, or is religion to be characterized by certain 'appropriate attitudes' within the autonomous field of ethics? The problem is resolved for Wilson by his assertion that we cannot 'step outside' the area of ethics (which, for Wilson, includes religion) without stepping inside one or more of Hirst's other forms of knowledge.

(6) We may make a number of observations. 'Religion' as '**sui generis**' is, for Wilson (whatever he might say to the contrary) reduced to 'morality'; that is, 'religion' is one form of moral thinking, namely, the association of certain emotional attitudes towards a 'divinity'. It follows that in teaching the 'moral components' in their entirety the teacher will necessarily be teaching, also, religion. What, then, of 'specifically religious terms' like 'divine', 'god', the 'supernatural', 'transcendence' and so on? We are asked by Wilson to see that at a certain point mundane emotional attitudes become **sui generis** religious attitudes, and it is difficult to deny that this fundamental change appears to be brought about by the recognition of an object as 'divine', the 'transcendent.' In opposition to Wilson's former conclusion, therefore, to the effect that 'religion' is characterised by emotional attitudes, we may now observe that such a recognition of divinity is an **intellectual** transformation, and that this event - the recognition of an object's worth or significance - determines how we should characterise our feelings; it is not our feelings which determine what the object is. We are brought to characterise our feelings as religious by a recognition of the transcendent nature of the object. Thus the mundane emotion 'awe' which we felt when we first heard the roar of the erupting volcano becomes distinctively **religious** awe only when we come to believe that what we hear is the voice of God on Horeb. And if this interpretation is correct then no amount of educating the emotions will necessarily lead to religious understanding. Without a recognition of some form of the transcendent the emotions will remain mundane. These two observations show the underlying inconsistency - the source of our confusion - in Wilson's thinking. We must conclude therefore that what determines the nature of religion, and therefore of what must be taught in RE, are what Wilson calls 'specifically religious' terms, not 'moral components.'

Wilson's emphasis on pupils' actually **feeling** 'the emotions and attitudes which he might then want to invest or adopt' is also questionable. On the conceptual level, if a pupil comes to feel awe or reverence for an object thought to be divine (and this is apparently what Wilson means by 'appropriate attitudes') does this not imply that the pupil must first come to believe that the object exists, that its nature is thus and so, and that it is worthy of reverence? And

if this is correct, is not the teaching and learning of facts and concepts relating to the nature of the phenomenon logically prior to feelings of awe and reverence that may or may not be appropriate? This is also, surely, the way we teach music or art; and it would be just as inappropriate to claim that music and art are to be characterised by, and recognized by means of, the teaching of certain emotions. Wilson does, indeed, claim comparability between these subjects in terms of 'experience.' 'For teaching "RE" is not a matter merely of instruction: the child also requires **experience**. In trying to educate children in those areas commonly called "musical appreciation" or "drama", we are not content merely to instruct them about music and drama: we also require them to take part in concerts and plays ... Provided we keep our aims clearly in mind, there is an obvious case to be made out for giving children that experience of religion that may be gained by particular forms of worship ... Like other aspects of religious education, this falls into place once we realize that we are out to educate children in religion, not to inculcate a particular religion.' (7) But we should not forget that the point about teaching 'music' or 'drama' is not that pupils shall become musicians and actors. It is that they shall come to know, to 'appreciate', what music and drama are; music and drama education is essentially a study of their nature and meaning, not necessarily, nor even centrally, playing an active part in concerts or drama. Where teachers require pupils to play a musical instrument or to act a part in a play it becomes one form of teaching method; a good one, perhaps, but not a logically necessary one. When we speak - as we often do - of getting pupils to 'experience' music we do not mean that they must play musical instruments. Wilson appears to have confused two senses of the notion 'experience'. The first sense, getting pupils to understand and appreciate music by listening, by instruction, by discussion and so on, is what teachers most often do and what is usually meant when we speak of teaching music in schools. This form of 'experience' is **necessary** in a logical way because it is what is meant by 'music appreciation.' The second sense, getting pupils to have an 'experience' of music, by playing an instrument, for example, may well be icing on the educational cake, but it is not necessary to music education. It can be argued that engagement in an experience at the compulsory school level is an important part of teaching method, and therefore a means to certain ends: for methodology is not an end in itself. That end, as I have argued in chapter four, is to get pupils to understand, rather than to engage in, certain accepted forms of human experience. 'Sin', like 'god', is a peculiarly religious concept: what emotions would Wilson have pupils learn

in order to achieve an understanding of this concept? Wilson's emphasis on a pupil's 'feeling' and 'experience' of certain emotions appropriate to religion, therefore, may be seen as an exaggerated - perhaps 'misunderstood' is not too strong - interpretation of certain teaching methods in RE, for he does at least make it clear 'we are out to educate children in religion, not to inculcate a particular religion.'

But one might ask whether the educating of certain emotions, for example, awe, worship and reverence, linked with the idea that pupils should come to 'feel' and 'experience' such emotions, might not actively promote a particular religious view of the world. How, logically, and practically, would one guard against that? And if there are religious believers teaching RE who would not object to such a result, would those same teachers be equally imper-turbable when pupils are learning how to understand and feel emotional aspects in communism, fascism or the worship of Aphrodite? (8) Perhaps there is a simpler answer to the suspected paradoxes implied in these questions. Wilson's stated reason for connecting 'religion' with 'moral education' is 'the feeling, now widely shared, that religious education alone could not provide a completely satisfactory framework for moral education.' (9) We may observe that perhaps the reason why religious education could not, and still cannot, provide such a framework is because there was and remains an epistemological distinction between them.

Criticism of Wilson does not mean that the learning process in RE cannot or should not use the emotions as a means, a teaching aid, to the understanding of religion (although that has its dangers). It is intended to show that we cannot assimilate RE to moral education by characterising religion as 'emotion' or by exaggerating the emotional experiences that religion undoubtedly involves.

III A phenomenological approach to RE

For the past ten years or so Ninian Smart has been one of the most influential writers on RE. (10) His idea of what counts as religion is perhaps the most important aspect of his contribution towards the RE debate. Let us examine what he calls 'a six dimensional account of religion.' (11) The characteristics described in this account apply to 'what a religion is, in the traditional,

conventional sense.' The six elements Smart distinguishes are: 1) doctrine, 2) myth, 3) ethics, 4) ritual, 5) experience and 6) social aspects. Since 'overlaps (of content) do not help enough to form the basis of a content-related definition' the 'formal' characteristics are used to illustrate what 'a religion' is. Smart examines the 'formal' characteristics of Buddhism and Christianity to show what he means. In 1) doctrine, Smart picks out the Christian idea of the Trinity and 'the structure of human existence' in Buddhism. In 2) myth, the 'passion and resurrection of Christ' and 'the Enlightenment of the Buddha and his temptation by Mara.' In 3) ethics, love and humility (in Christianity), and 'compassion to all living beings' and 'a peaceful detached attitude to the normal values of this world' (in Buddhism). In 4) ritual, there are 'the sacraments' in Christianity, and 'rituals of initiation, preaching of the Dharma' in Buddhism. In 5) experience, one may compare 'Paul on the damascus Road' with 'Buddha under the Bo tree.' Finally, in 6) social aspects of a religion, the Christian 'church' might be compared with the Buddhist 'Sangha.'

The 'notion of **religion** as distinguished from that of **a religion**' says Smart, has to do with the depth of meaning in life, and 'questions about ultimate meaning that can be regarded as religious are to do with **values**.' But it is the depth of the values involved which determine whether a value is religious or not; '...it is a matter of degree of depth ... not just the limit of ultimacy, whatever that is, but near there, for the truly important questions of value also can raise religious problems.' To strengthen this point Smart adds '... though all value-questions have in principle a religious aspect, in fact it is more practical to see the deeper value-questions as religious.'

Smart, then, has a two-pronged conclusion to the question What is religion? First, since both religions and ideologies present us with 'facts and feelings' and since characteristics in common may be found, 'the exploration of religions passes over into the exploration of ideologies.' Secondly '**religion** (as distinct, at least in conception, from the religions)' deals with "'ultimate" value-questions related to the meaning of human life.' And, because questions of 'ultimate' value are as integral to political ideologies as to religion, the study of the second form of the question will also involve a study of ideologies.

Finally, Smart feels it important to add explanatory comments on the connection between religion and morality, especially since he has indicated that an explanation of 'religion' (if not of 'religions') must also include an explana-

tion of ideologies. The relationship between religion and ideology on the one hand and morality on the other is one of 'superimposition.' Instead of a logical connection there is a 'superimposition of religion on morality.' A similar relationship' he argues, exists between morality and ideology and politics 'the political aspect of human life should in principle attract a superimposed interpretation.' At a certain unspecifiable depth important questions about life, whether asked within religion or within politics, are joined together to become 'problems of value.' Since all fundamental problems are problems of value both religion and politics are united at this point. Distinctions will arise (presumably) when we 'superimpose' either religious interpretations or political interpretations upon basic value questions. We are to 'perceive' morality as either religious or political. Since it is important, in Smart's view, that a study of 'religion' will involve a study of political ideology, which is 'as analogous to traditional religions', he makes the point '... if then a secular society is pluralist, then by contrast totalitarian societies, such as China and Russia are not really secular. They may claim to be anti-religious but they are committed societies analogous to the Scotland of John Knox or the medieval situation of the Papacy.'

The kind of RE which emerges from Smart's analysis is one which includes not only religion as it is traditionally conceived but also politics and morality. Few would accept (least of all, I suspect, Smart himself) that Smart's account of religion is definitive, or that there are logically necessary links between the several parts of his six dimensional proposal, or between what he has called 'explicit' and 'implicit' religion. His account is, rather, a structuring of 'certain common **formal** characteristics' expressed in a manner which allows us to see what can be meant by, for example, 'explicit and implicit religion': by spoken or unspoken hopes and fears deep within the human soul. Smart has in fact given us a synthesis of the commonality of man's fundamental springs of action; his deepest feelings of value. And the synthesis excludes nothing of importance; we shall see in a moment the limitations imposed on Smart's conception of religion by this.

Focus in complex experience is crucial to an understanding of what there is in the world. This is as true in education as it is in philosophy. We may surely agree that Smart's six dimensions are in some way involved in religious experience, but how are they related to one another, if at all? Precisely how are they involved? Can they be said to characterise or define religion in any distinctive way? What might be the 'objective tests' by which we may dis-

tinguish, for example, 'doctrine' as religious? For it cannot be reasonably held that doctrine *per se* is religious. Christian doctrine is very specific. The doctrine of baptism has attached to it quite distinctive concepts related to fellowship with God and the salvation of man through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. If a 'Christian' were to believe that 'baptism' had no such connections but, rather, was meant to signify a social position and future wealth or success in the local community, then while this rite might be accurately described as an enactment of a doctrine, it could not be a Christian doctrine. It is only partly true to say, therefore, that Christianity is characterised by doctrine for without giving the doctrines of Christianity very specific meanings nothing of any religious significance emerges. As we have seen, the doctrine 'sin' - a traditionally religious word - can only take its meaning from the categorial concept 'transcendence' or 'God' if it is to hold specifically religious meaning; without this connection the word is reduced to something akin to a legal concept such as 'breaking the law.' To use the word 'sin' for a breach of the law in communist Russia would seem to extend its use beyond a reasonable point.

Then take the notion of 'ritual'. Ritual, says Smart, is one of the six dimensions of a religion as well as of 'religion' in his 'implicit' sense. What is the logic that allows us to **deny** that certain rituals, say, smearing a fox's blood on someone's face, are religious? And by what criteria are we to assert that, say, sprinkling the blood of a lamb on someone's face **is** religious? Consider what happens when we bring into play the categorial concept 'God' as a criterion for what, with more certainty, can be regarded as religious. Smearing a fox's blood on someone's face has no reference to God but does signify, under certain specific conditions, an important occasion in the ritual of fox-hunting; it is therefore a ritual of one form of blood sports. On the other hand, sprinkling the blood of a lamb on someone's face, again under certain specific conditions, has a direct reference to the work of God in the Hebrew religion. Without that transcendent reference or criterion the act would have no clear meaning.

What, now, of Smart's idea of 'deeper values' being identified with religion? It is possible that Smart would not want to use words like 'sin' or 'blasphemy' in relation to political ideologies on the grounds that political ideologies are not 'religions' but merely (more importantly?) 'religious' in virtue of their concern with 'ultimate' questions. But doubt must also be cast on his fundamental theory that 'questions about ultimate meaning', such as the meaning of life and death, are in any way religious questions. A medical doctor is concer-

ned with life and death and even with the quality of life; in what sense can his medical attitude be regarded as 'religious'? Such a person may have become a doctor from purely intellectually scientific, egoistic or pecuniary motives. If it be insisted that a deep concern for the quality of life (for example, physical and mental health) and concern for the purpose of life before and perhaps beyond death is by definition 'religious' then the edges of the concept are becoming blurred; concepts are merging into one another; focus in complex experience is becoming difficult. It is easy to see the slide into total ambiguity. The person we saw as an atheist yesterday will become, because of his feelings of deep concern about a certain quality of life, tomorrow's typical religious figure. Would the church then consider canonizing Voltaire and Stalin beside St. Francis? Yesterday's political decisions will be tomorrow's religious principles on the grounds that they are decided by reference to the deepest feelings of care for humanity. Would that make a democratically elected politician 'religious' by popular vote? That communism denies any pretensions to being religious is irrelevant, according to Smart, since it merely indicates that Russia, say, has not yet realized that its deep concern for values, and its considerable efforts to improve the quality of life of its citizens are religious qualities. (12)

The overspill of religion into political ideologies and other forms of experience is inevitable in Smart's thesis. The basic relationship between them is a certain unspecifiable depth of values held, and we are to suppose that at this unspecified depth the 'problems of value' are similar enough to 'religion' to warrant their being accepted as different aspects of the same human experience - religion. Yet it seems that in regarding religion in this way Smart has inverted the order of primacy. Traditional religions hold 'ultimate' values to be valuable on the grounds that they are of divine origin, not, as Smart would have it, that religion is to be defined in terms of what is of 'ultimate' value. What is knowable of 'good' and 'right' arises, rather, "from man's understanding of divine transcendence. Take, for instance, questions of 'ultimate value' in Islam. 'Islam has always claimed' says Syed Ali Ashraf 'that there is only one religion in the universe, therefore, there has always been one basic universal code of morality, of good and evil.' (13) It is clearly arguable from this that the 'universal code of morality' can be known only as a consequence of there being religion; that is to say, 'universal morality', for the Muslim, finds its origin and authority in God's revelation. For Islam religion is not itself merely the judgments of men as to what might be regarded as of ultimate value; it has a specifically divine origin. A teacher who achieves 'breadth of vision, depth

of realization and the supreme ideal of human nobility and greatness' can only do so because these qualities are 'enshrined in the concept of man as the Vice-regent (Khalifatullah) of God.' (14) The 'Islamic concept... presents man as potentially capable of reaching truth because God has breathed His own spirit in man.' (15) This interpretation of 'ultimate values' having a divine origin has specific, practical ramifications for the Muslim. It carries with it a **rejection** of certain values which, according to Smart, can be construed as religious 'to some degree.' A precise example is given by Syed Ali Ashraf: While D.H. Lawrence's 'presentation of human characters and certain human situations has **natural validity** ... the way in which he has presented them, the method with which he rouses the emotions and demands the assent of the reader to a scheme of life in which sex plays the most dominant and most effective role, makes it difficult for the reader with religious feelings to accept this interpretation of life as something valid and true.' (16) The limitations imposed on the Muslim's acceptance or rejection of values of any kind arise in his experience of the will of God as shown in the Qur'an. All that is valuable, for Islam, originates in the Muslim's experience of God as interpreted by Muhammad in the Qur'an. The transcendent (i.e. the religious) determines what is valuable; it is not 'values' in some vague sense (however deep) that determine what is religious.

As if in recognition of this finality in the will of God, Smart considers 'religious morality ... not **just** morality but also as something religious.' (17) It is at this point that Smart seems forced to concede that the distinctiveness of religion (and the form of morality involved in it) is, in the last analysis, based on the categorial concept 'God.' What makes a moral action 'religious', for Smart, is, after all, the 'superimposition' of religion upon whatever he considers to be his Christian duty. Yet this seems to be something of a tautology unless we involve the concept 'God' in religion. Thus Smart finds it necessary to say 'As a Christian ... I am ... involved in the practice of the presence of God.' (18) Indeed, without the concept 'God' it is difficult to make sense of Smart's plea that 'RE must transcend the informative' and that 'initiation demands an awareness ... of ... inward elements of religion - like feelings of awe, wonder and love and the need to express these feelings in worship' (19) for these 'inward elements' that lead to 'worship' find their logic precisely within the framework of the transcendent. There seems to be, otherwise, no logic in linking concepts like 'awe, wonder and love' to **religion** rather than to any other form of experience.

Smart's six-dimensional description of religion is not, and does not purport to be, an epistemological thesis. Perhaps we may take the description at its face value. When we look around the world and observe that people do indeed hold beliefs involving strong commitments to one or another way of life, to values, to doctrines, to organizations and so on, we may not wish to deny that there is something 'religious-like' in their attitudes and lifestyles. And thus may we speak of them in a loose manner, for it is not uncommon to hear it said of some honest soul: 'There's a **real** Christian for you!' But it should not be forgotten that the pattern of goodness so described is taken from a distinctive, if idealized, religion. Characteristics we may describe in a general way as 'religious' very often arise in a **a priori** knowledge of a religion. But it is precisely the lack of a thoroughgoing epistemological basis in Smart's characterization that makes it less than satisfying in the attempt to answer his own problem 'We need to come to an intellectual understanding of what religion is ... so that ... a cogent educational plan can be evolved.' (20) It is, indeed, normal procedure to pre-determine criteria for what can be known with some specificity. For example, the agreed criterion of formal logical axioms allows us to assert that no empirical material can be included in a mathematical theorem. The criterion determines what sort of things it is legitimate to say in mathematics. Since such criteria are wanting in Smart's account of religion we are left to chase our own tails if we say that doctrine, ethics, organizations and so on are in some way necessary characteristics of religion. They may be characteristics of religion, but how do we know they are? It is surely not obvious, on reflection, that any moral commitment, however strongly felt, is, **per se**, 'religious'. And a similar question can be asked of the other dimensions.

It may be argued that some explanation and justification for Smart's dimensional approach may be found in his **The philosophy of Religion** (21), particularly in the first chapter where he discusses the concept of religion. Smart there maintains that to define religion in terms of a single common feature, such as Otto's 'experience of the Holy' or in terms of 'faith in God', is insufficient. 'Abstractive faith', as Smart calls oversimplified definitions of religion, 'can give a relatively rich account of the core of religion, say in terms of faith in God; but it does this at the expense of falling foul of the facts ... Abstractive faith can posit a very thin, imprecise core. And does not this give religion too thin a substance?' (22) Smart is surely correct in suggesting 'There is no **a priori** reason to think that there is but one major form of religious expe-

rience ... It is easier to suppose that there are variations in experience, which in part account for the divergencies.' (23) One must take into account, in defining religion, the diversity of what is actually there: 'religion as we find it has to do with prayers and incense and the numinous and worship and practical conduct. Religion as we find it is embedded in rites, and yoga, and meditation, and churches, and temples, and monasteries, and music, and art,' (24) Smart goes on to elaborate the difficulties involved in attempts to weld together into a definition so many disparate elements. He asks 'Would not one have to know a lot of science before one could claim to understand the meaning of science? Likewise, surely one has to know quite a lot about religions before a formula can be of any help.' (25)

The quest for a satisfactory and inclusive definition of religion and the difficulties encountered in any attempt to acquire one occupy, and naturally so, Smart's point of departure for his more complete characterization of significant problems in the philosophy of religion. We must now ask: Do the issues raised by Smart in his discussion of the problems inherent in the search for 'definitions' of religion amount to an implicit or explicit criticism - a denial of the adequacy - of the characterization of religion in terms of 'God' and 'the transcendent' earlier discussed? The answer will, in large part, depend upon the meaning we attach to 'definition.' We can give a weak or a strong interpretation to 'definition.' As an example of the weak interpretation we might take the Christian concept of the 'Eucharist'. The 'Eucharist', we might say, is necessarily defined in terms of the crucifixion of Christ; a necessary but not sufficient condition for understanding the concept 'Eucharist.' In its stronger sense 'definition' will involve both necessary and sufficient conditions, as in a formal mathematical theorem. That Smart is thinking in terms of the stronger meaning of 'definition' is indicated by his use of the word 'formula' as a synonym for 'definition' and by his suggestion that a definition in religion 'is scarcely probable - as though we could not understand science through a short form of words'. (26) It is not to be supposed that the concepts 'God' and 'transcendence' **define** religion in the strong sense. Rather, it is being suggested that 'God' and 'transcendence' are merely necessary concepts picked out from admittedly innumerable phenomena but most commonly accepted as central features in the notion of 'religion' - features that characterise 'religion' much as 'ought' and 'right' pick out concepts central to, and characteristic of, moral discourse. Would we not wish to say that a **description** of the various branches of mathematics is a different **sort** of process from picking out those logically necessary features that

distinguish mathematics from, say, science? Further, is not the former activity logically dependent upon the latter? (Although it may be more fruitful in educational methods to teach them in reverse order, that is, to describe and practice the different forms - arithmetic and geometry for example - before attempting to characterize the nature of mathematics, traditionally at a much later stage.) And would we not say that an adequate account of the nature of a phenomenon depends, in the last resort, upon our agreement in publicly shared language and concepts? For, as I have already argued, 'the facts' have a habit of remaining silent. It is, conceivably, the 'philosopher' in man that gives to 'the facts' their meaning. While it is important to be aware that, as Smart says, philosophy of religion 'has to be tied back to religion and religions as they manifest themselves' (27), it is still necessary to ask how we are to identify phenomena as religious to begin with. We may say, therefore, that a multi-dimensional approach to the study of religion, such as Smart advocates, does not deny the adequacy of the concepts 'God' and 'transcendence' considered as necessary, central concepts in a characterisation of religion. The dimensional approach is, perhaps, rather to be seen as a way of arriving at a more comprehensive understanding of religion once the process of identification has got off the ground. Smart's descriptive, or 'phenomenological' approach may be better seen as an important methodological procedure in RE. Talk of how 'variations in (religious) experience' might 'account for the divergencies' is premature until we are agreed on criteria by which experiences may be identified as religious. The problem with which we are confronted in Smart's six dimensional account of religion, therefore, remains. We cannot say, merely by observing phenomena, what is typically religious without prior agreement on what is to count as 'religion'. Acceptance of such criteria would not necessarily provide us with a 'rich account of the core of religion', for that would not be the purpose of picking out the criteria, but it does allow us to recognize the 'religious' in a way that detailed empirical study does not.

The practical value for teachers of RE which Smart's six dimensional characterization of religion has undoubtedly had in recent years should not be underestimated. But it remains a philosophically necessary step to pin down the dimensions in a more precise manner such as the one I have already proposed. Having said this, however, we cannot too lightly overlook the ambiguities built into the six dimensional model. We should now be aware that not all rituals, morality, organizations, doctrines and so on are necessarily religious and may

be, at best, only peripheral issues for the teacher of religion. What, of these dimensions, an RE teacher wishes to teach must be referred, with a certain amount of critical consideration, to the categorial concepts 'God' and 'transcendence.'

IV 'Implicit' religion

I have suggested that the religious person may see the whole of life, in all its complexity, as religious. But many school syllabuses and writers in RE go further, in one sense, and not far enough in another. They do not go far enough in that whereas religious people see all world phenomena, events, values, commitments, organizations, as providence-guided, the religious educationalist who wishes to include in his teaching much more than traditional religion sees only tentative connections. The substance of this extra-religious material has been termed 'implicit' religion. The 'tentativeness' of the material lies in the fact that there seems sometimes to be little or no connection between it and traditional religions. On the other hand, it could be argued that protagonists of 'implicit' religion go too far in the sense that while it is necessary for the **religious believer** to hold a religious 'world view' - i.e. to interpret everything in the world as happening with the active, if mysterious, guidance of God - the same compulsion does not apply either to the educationalist or to the student as such. Theirs, surely, is the attitude of **inquiry**, not the attitude of the committed religious believer. Where, then, is the teacher to draw the line between what may legitimately be taught as religion and what is at best tentative and at worst superfluous?

What is 'implicit' religion? 'Explicit' religion concerns the doctrines and practices of a traditional religion, for example, the Christian religion. **Working Paper 36** says that 'implicit' religion might be, for instance, 'the capacity to explore music with a view to seeing whether it can give one new insights into the nature of the world; and, if so, the connexion of these with questions about the "purpose" of life.' (28) 'What we have termed "implicit" religion' the Working Paper goes on 'may feature in discussion at almost any point in the school day, and teachers of many disciplines will be contributing, one way or another, to their pupils' search for answers to religious questions. For example, a good biology teacher will be willing to discuss with the pupils their qualms about vivisection, even though this is not really part of the academic study of biology.' (29)

The breadth of the 'implicit approach to religion is perhaps more fully shown in the writings of J.W.D. Smith:

Men may be Christian or non-Christian, religious, agnostic or atheist, but all men are human. True human living begins in the awareness of death. Death symbolizes the mystery, and the menace, which self-awareness holds for finite beings. At some stage - and especially, perhaps, in contemporary adolescence - we are all "grazed" by the mystery of being and non-being. We may seek to escape from it. We may rebel against it. We can only become mature, whole and free human beings by learning to live with our finitude. This task reaches the level of conscious response and decision in adolescence. It remains an uncompleted task throughout our mortal lives. (30)

In this passage, which is, says Smith 'a basic argument for this book', we get a glimpse of the vast scope of RE as it is envisaged by those educationalists who incorporate in the teaching of religion the 'implicit' domain. It includes no less than traditional metaphysical problems on the one hand (e.g. 'whole and free human-beings'; the concept of being 'human'; and so on), and on the other hand psychological aspects of what it means to become 'mature'. What is at stake in RE according to Smith is nothing less than a study of man's total physical, moral, mental and spiritual development; 'human questions' are 'religious questions' and 'ultimately inescapable.' Donald Horder, Deputy Director of the Schools Council Projects on Religious Education for 1969-1976, cites Smith with approval and adds 'the quest for meaning and purpose and the quest for understanding of religion and religions' (the 'implicit' religion approach and the 'explicit' religion approach respectively) 'are both right and proper activities in schools.' (31) More specifically the implicit domain of RE is thought by many to involve teaching in the areas of politics, ethics (moral education), sociology, history, music and the arts, the community and community relations. Space forbids more than a sketch of the problems arising in close analysis; I shall indicate some of the more important questions that may be asked.

Take politics. That fundamental conceptual differences between religious ideology and political ideology exist would surely be agreed. That, at the same time, some people see in their religious view of life political significance in their religious beliefs (e.g. it is seen by some Jews that Jerusalem should not

be partitioned - a point of political debate - because their beliefs about Jerusalem are of religious consequence to them) is a good reason to study those religious beliefs (in this case, Judaism) that have such political repercussions but hardly sufficient reason to go into detailed discussion on the Camp David agreement. Hence the feeling of putting the cart before the horse when a teacher of religion embarks on a course in, for example, Chinese Marxism.

Perhaps the biggest single problem area in 'implicit' RE is that of ethics or moral education. Why is this considered to be a problem? In the first place, although ethics plays a large part in modern secular societies, no special provision is made for it on the school timetable. This in itself is odd until it is realized that moral education (ME) is generally inserted as a sub-heading in the RE programme. At least this large and important subject has house-room there. But why, we may ask, in RE? The reason is probably historical. At the beginning of compulsory education in the west over one hundred years ago the only acceptable form of morality, speaking generally, was thought to be that enshrined in the distinctive tenets of Christianity. Therefore the RE lesson was also the ME lesson. But there is another complication. RE (involving ME) held, in earlier years, a different status from other subjects on the school timetable. Unlike subjects such as arithmetic and history 'religion' (in this case Christianity) was taught as a confessional dogma; its principles basically unquestioned and unquestionable. 'Religion' in schools was no less than an extension, an arm, of the church. The attitude of the teacher in religion was that of the preacher rather than the teacher. Students were expected to become committed to a Christian way of life by means of the dogmas. Thus patterns of religious behaviour were also tenets of morality, for no distinction was made between them. Old habits die hard. We may ask the question: Is it not the case that most specialist teachers of RE are religious? And if this is so, is it not just possible that religious teachers of RE may have a genuine and deep desire to teach aspects of their religion as if such aspects were also 'moral' in a secular society? If such a hypothesis were to substantially reflect the facts we should surely expect to find ME taught as an aspect of RE, for this is how ME was originally conceived. This, indeed, is what we generally do see in education. And it leads us to ask, further: Since we no longer regard RE as an extension of the work of the church; since RE is no longer regarded as 'confessional' by nature, ought we not, now, to investigate the logic of the relationship that places a secular pattern of behaviour, namely 'behaving morally', within the purview of religion? For it can no longer be automatically assumed that a religious teacher of religion

can or should teach secular patterns of behaviour (ME). The rationale that held together religion and morality a hundred years ago may no longer apply. Indeed, in a secular society, it simply cannot be assumed that society's morality has something to do with religion. **Prima facie**, therefore, it appears that a case could be made out for distinguishing between RE (which will involve the teaching of religious patterns of behaviour 'religious morality'), and ME, which will involve the teaching of, an examination of, what the secular society regards as 'morality.' Some similarities in the material thus taught there will surely be, for today's secular societies were yesterday's committed religious communities. But teachers would at least be clear that in ME there is no necessary relationship to RE; and teachers of religion would no longer imagine that the religious patterns of behaviour they must perforce speak about has any practical and personal application in a modern secular society. Of the 'implicit religion' approach Peter Gedge says 'If it is adopted as the sole approach to RE and ME, it may not do justice to a proper concept of RE, because it is too easy for the distinctively transcendent elements in religion to escape attention, and it might hinder a proper treatment of ME by assuming a theistic basis to morals.' (32)

It is with the logical distinction that we are concerned. We have seen in the argument against Smart's six dimensional approach to a definition in religion how an examination of the Muslim religion would support the distinction. What Paton called Karl Barth's 'intolerant attitude' is found 'for example, among those Mohammedan

theologians who rejected all attempts to enrich their traditional doctrine with ideas derived from Greek philosophy. Influenced by the Greek idea of justice, one school of innovators, the Mu'tazilites, dared to maintain that God was Infinite Justice, and not merely - as had hitherto been taught - Infinite Power and Infinite Love and Mercy. The orthodox banned this Hellenic novelty on the ground that since the requirements of absolute justice were expressed in terms derived from human reason, the products of human reason were being given an absolute value above the word of God.' (33)

The position espoused by some philosophers to the effect that God commands what is good because it is good (rather than what is good is good because God commands it) is mere sophistry to some religious believers. Similar illustrations could be provided from both Judaism and Christianity. Take the Hebrew religion, for instance. Patterns of interpersonal behaviour such as the Ten Commandments are thought by many teachers of religion to be **moral** patterns. This seems to be simply a mistake. The Commandments of Exodus 20 are **religious** injunctions for they owe their authority to the will of God alone and specific reasons are given to justify them '... **for** I the Lord thy God am a jealous God', and '... the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand ... **therefore** ...' (34) (And even if the Commandments were considered 'moral' they may be seen as one form of the naturalistic fallacy.) From the religious point of view, as I have said, a secular bible would seem to be a contradiction in terms. Injunctions that we find in the bible are given with specific reference to God. The scriptures are no more concerned with an autonomous man-reasoned moral code than they are with a purely historical account of the Jews or a purely scientific account of various physical phenomena. Thus 'thou shalt not kill' is not part of a moral code having its metalogic in the sanctity of human life but is a divine command given for very specific circumstances. The RE teacher may indeed have to examine religious behavioural injunctions but this does not mean that he must identify them with any form of secular morality.

There is the further point that scriptural commands and injunctions, **because** they are of divine origin, effectively take **moral** responsibility out of the hands of the individual. The individual is not allowed to decide between good and evil **without reference to** basic religious commands. 'To obey is better than sacrifice' Samuel told Saul when Saul took it into his own hands to decide to keep alive Agag, king of the Amalekites. (35) Indeed, the whole idea of 'religious authority' negates what Kurt Baier has called 'moral self-mastery'. And, as Baier says 'Adults without moral self-mastery are not moral beings.' (36) The very concept of autonomous moral responsibility seems to be logically detached from scripture and religious injunctions. 'Those who do not understand that no-one can properly be held morally responsible for that which lies or lay outside his own (individual) control, have not yet understood the very meaning of the concepts that together make up the family concept morality.' (37)

Those who wish to teach ethics - ME - under the heading 'implicit' religion tend to obfuscate the very real distinctions that exist between religion and morality. A quite different game is being played; the rules are different. There appears to be no 'teleological suspension of the ethical', as Kierkegaard so elegantly argues. (38) Kierkegaard's 'absurd paradox' - that Abraham 'as the particular is higher than the universal' - is **dissolved** by the recognition that Abraham was a man of religious faith and is therefore **typical** of a 'universal' of a different sort from that of secular ethics. For I take it that secular morality is a universe of discourse with distinctive categorial concepts such as 'obligation', 'ought' and 'right' whose objective tests for validity have their origin in publicly accepted secular judgments. And such criteria may be distinguished from religious judgments that are characterized by the notion of transcendence. Similar problems of demarcation arise in many other fields that the literature sees fit to include in 'implicit' religion. 'The use of historical evidence' and how the 'human spirit' expresses itself 'through music and the arts' are topics to be found in the Dorset Syllabus of RE (1979); a study of the community 'an introduction to its organisation', 'care for homeless children', 'old people and handicapped' appear in the Dudley Syllabus (1979). No doubt a strong case could be made for interdisciplinary studies among these and other areas mentioned. But this is quite another matter from the assumption that is made that a study of religion **necessarily** implies a study also of other autonomous or semi-autonomous disciplines.

V Attitudes in 'implicit' RE

We may question the manner of 'implicit' religion too; the form of approach the teacher makes to RE. While it could not be described as the teaching of 'confessional' religion there appears to be a **confessional-type** disposition in the way the material is presented. We have seen that education as a second order process requires a certain detachment as a prerequisite for the objective study of phenomena. Concepts that are central to a given form of knowledge are brought to the student for examination with the objective that the student shall come to know and understand them. We have seen that this is the case with subjects like mathematics, science, literature and history. (Notwithstanding certain practical exercises that may be included in pedagogical method.) Objectives in implicit RE appear to be markedly different. What implicit RE amounts

to, as it may be discerned in current accounts, is a considerable effort expended on a trip of discovery **about the students themselves**. In implicit RE the student's attention may be at first directed towards objective phenomena, like music or Marxism, but rather sooner than later the subject becomes a 'dialogue with experience' concerned with 'the "purpose" of life', intended to evoke 'life's ultimate significance, its values, meaning, and purpose' in relation to a **'personal** search for meaning.' (39) The teaching of implicit religion becomes a student quest for a personal life-style; a search for what the 'mystery' of life means to the student; an introspective involvement based on the assumption that 'life **must** hold some unitary essence already prepared and only awaiting the student's personal decision. What is being offered to students in implicit religion appears to be not an objective, impartial study of phenomena but a personal guide to some non-imposed but identifiable religious/mystical/value goal fostering a confessional-type disposition. Far from seeing an education in religion as an objective study of one form of man's experience among many, the Birmingham Handbook sees RE as an opportunity to urge the student to become **committed**: 'The task of the religious education specialist is to ... emphasize the meaninglessness which can arise from being uncommitted.' (40) And one of the aims of RE in the Dorset Syllabus is: 'To stimulate the search for a faith by which to live.' (41) A not-so-implicit thought is expressed in **RE Aktuell**: 'I moralfrågor måste uppläggnen bli öppnare medan samtidigt medvetenheten om betydelsen av ett personligt engagemang i moralfrågorna måste lyftas fram i undervisningen.' ('In questions of morality the presentation should be more open while at the same time one must emphasize, in teaching, an awareness of the importance of personal engagement in moral questions.' (42) Indoctrination of the pejorative kind seems merely a short step away from the assertion that 'life' does hold specific, personal meaning; that such a view is 'religious' in that it contains a certain 'depth of value', as Smart would maintain, and that a study of religion in its implicit guise is the way a student may find it.

Ideologies such as communism and humanism, the morality of a secular society, history, the community and community relations etc., are important forms of human experience quite distinct from religion by the nature of their categorial concepts and the ways in which they may be submitted to objective validation. It would not be unreasonable, one might observe, to assign to them a separate place on the school curriculum where they may be studied in the depth they deserve and where they may make their unique contribution to the process of education.

VI 'Choice' and 'truth' in RE

Two other characteristics in contemporary RE deserve closer examination; both may be recognizeably related to 'implicit religion' attitudes. They may be called 'choice' and 'truth' in RE. Ideas such as the 'personal search for meaning', the answering of 'ultimate' questions, even the 'settling of personal qualms' all tend to represent RE as a supermarket in which choice has to be made; in which a way of life may be discovered. But the kind of choice considered in the literature, as we have seen, turns out to be whether or not students shall choose as a matter of personal belief to accept **this** set of doctrines or values, or **that** particular way of life. Within an educational context this aspect of teaching and learning seems inappropriate. What is the **educational** relevance, when teaching, say, the Christian concept 'baptism', in suggesting that a student may now 'choose' whether to be baptised or not? If it be retorted by the teacher that such was not his intention but, rather, his intention was that the student should become 'aware' of the meaning of 'baptism', then such an explanation would seem to reduce to 'teaching the concept "baptism"; a quite legitimate aim in RE. But it follows from this that, since 'baptism' is a central concept in the Christian religion, no 'choice' is possible. For, coming to understand Christianity **means** learning the concept 'baptism' (for example). By the logic of the situation students in school are not allowed to choose whether to learn or not what 'simple addition' means in arithmetic. Similarly in the teaching of Christianity, there be no choice about whether or not to learn the meaning of the most important concepts involved in that religion.

More generally, 'education' seen as a second order process does not hold within its meaning that students shall choose to be this or that **within** the educational situation but, rather, that they shall be equipped for choices that may (or may not) be made **ultimately** and at a stage **beyond** the process. Choices and decisions of the kind envisaged by many writers and educationalists in RE belong to the autonomous, educated individual, not to the student **qua** student. Education is, and ought to be, I have argued, a comprehensive study of man's experience; but the idea of 'choice' indicated in the writers noted above seems to lie beyond this study. As I have tried to show earlier, there seems to be a difference of a logical kind between, for example, knowing what music is and being a musician; or, to use Oakeshott's imagery, between learning how to drive and being a driver. It might be thought self-evident that the logical difference consists, on the one hand, in undergoing an education which gives

individuals the power to choose and, on the other, the act of choosing. As Peters has said 'The pupil has gradually to get the grammar of the activity into his guts so that he can eventually win through to the stage of autonomy.' (43)

Daniel W. Hardy outlines a procedure for RE in which discussion can take place 'without prejudgments ... and therefore allows that the truth is at issue between these (different religious) traditions and that it is that truth which is interwoven with the personal lives and views and actions of its adherents in the classroom. Hence religious education tries to foster open communication between truth-tellers in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. The supposition is that the truth is in such discussion and will emerge through this open communication.' (44) The phrasing is odd when read in an educational context; it might be more at home in the opening remarks of the chairman of some ecumenical church meeting. Why should it be assumed that even knowledge, let alone 'truth' (it we may claim a distinction for the moment), exists among students in an RE lesson? And does any precise meaning attach to the idea that a 'truth' of some kind is 'interwoven with the personal lives and views and actions of' pupils? Is it of any educational moment that 'truth' in, say, science or history, be so 'interwoven' with the lives of students? Does such a lack of proximity retard a student's understanding of, say, the biology of an amoeba or the campaigns of Caesar? What can be said about this 'search for truth' in RE? Direct personal involvement, engagement in a first order experience is clearly implied if not always stated. Consider, then, the idea that teaching religion involves a quest for 'truth', for it looks distinctly odd if it be compared with other subjects on a school curriculum. Would we normally say of a music lesson that we are looking for musical truth? Or of a mathematics lesson that we are seeking mathematical truth? It might be agreed that there is such a thing as truth in music (though it may be difficult to say what that is) and truth in mathematics and so on. But what seems to be odd in putting down 'the search for truth' as an objective in a lesson is that it is stated as an issue to be discussed or discovered **separately from** the subject matter itself. It is a logical oddity in that in, say, a physics lesson, talk about the relationship between electrons and nuclei is what it **means** to talk about 'truth' in physics. Similarly in mathematics: the 'truth' involved in $2+2=4$ is the **same thing** as $2+2=4$. It is, simply, unnecessary to state both that the object of the lesson is 'to come to understand an equation' **and** 'to discover the truth about an equation.' Being able to say exactly what the truth is in religion may be at least as difficult as being able to say what the truth is in music but nothing

is added to a lesson objective which claims to 'bring students to a knowledge and understanding of the religious idea of salvation' (for instance) by the further statement: 'students will also look for the truth in salvation.' This is so because bringing students 'to know and understand' what is involved in the idea of 'religious salvation' will involve necessarily bringing to them also some notion of its 'truth' value within the discourse of religion. The precise point I am concerned with here is that comments such as 'At the present time of uncertainty and rethinking (RE) must be a search in which teacher and student "feel after truth and find it",' (45) seem to betray an extra-educational element, a desire to get students involved in religion as a first order experience, or in some non-religious experience such as the 'right' social attitude. None of this is to deny that epistemology, or a study of truth claims, may be included in an educational process. Far from it. But this area of study is perhaps more appropriate to a course in philosophy, or it may at least be recognized as the **metaphysis** of each form of knowledge. This simply takes us back to a consideration of whether, and by what criteria, religion may be regarded as a form of knowledge. A discussion of truth claims in this sense is not the same thing as the idea of a 'search for truth' - or, perhaps more accurately, 'a search for something to believe in' - as it is portrayed in contemporary RE literature.

Does RE, then, involve the presentation to students of only the most obvious, traditional concepts of religion, and must it reject the many different aspects of seemingly secular experience so often included in syllabuses and the literature? If it does, it might be objected, how dry and uninteresting the subject must be, and how untrue to life. What emerges from the present characterization of the nature of the educational process and from the examination of religion as a distinct form of knowledge is not so much that RE must logically exclude human experience in any of its facets, but that as a vehicle for the passing on of religious knowledge within the sphere of education RE must be seen to have good reasons for the educational aims it espouses and for the contents to be taught. The philosophical investigation undertaken here indicates that contemporary thought on RE does not make clear these fundamental issues. It should be unnecessary to say that some clarity in determining the nature of the religious phenomena to be taught in schools would be of the greatest help to RE teachers. And I have argued that existing theories and philosophical analyses appear to lack a thorough epistemological rationale for RE. Moreover,

a deficiency of this kind leads to obscurity in religious knowledge as well as misplaced emphases in certain other areas of social knowledge. Contents of current curricula, I have argued, may have but a peripheral bearing on religious knowledge and appear to lead to confessional-like teaching of religion. The extent to which material is central or peripheral to religion can now be made clearer by reference to the categorial concept 'transcendence'. The aim the RE teacher may have for his students is that they shall come to know and understand religion as part of man's experience of the world without further and extrinsic aims such as some form of personal commitment or engagement. First order engagement of this sort, I have argued, is a characteristic of the autonomous, educated person rather than of those being brought to the threshold of that condition.

From what we know of the various forms of knowledge, whether of mathematics, history, science, literature or religion, the nature of a subject - and therefore its contents in at least the more 'exaggerated forms' - is determined by universal consensus so that in an important respect it may be described as having an independent life of its own. Accordingly it may be argued that education planners, parents and even teachers in any single community may not be in a position to reorganize the concepts and contents of a subject at will. What educationalists will discover, by and large, is that the phenomenon 'religion' is to be recognized in the way people conceive themselves, their actions and beliefs, in relation to some form of transcendence. A careful interpretation of this principle will show, I believe, points of considerable significance to the RE teacher seeking a viable curriculum. It will reveal, firstly, that what Smart calls 'the religions' will form the centrepiece of a study of religion. Secondly, it will reveal that in, say, Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, subjects such as 'community relations', 'ethics', 'sex', 'the role of women in society' and 'smoking and drugs' will be logically related to religion in that such things are divinely controlled; for the **shari'ah** (a detailed code of conduct) tells us what is right and wrong in all areas of life as originally laid down by Muhammad in the Qur'an whose 'each and every word is from Allah', (46) and the Qur'an is supreme in such countries. The RE teacher will discover, thirdly, that, generally speaking, these same areas of experience in most western countries under secular legal codes have little or nothing to do with religion.

The picture that emerges from schools today is that religion as a distinctive area of man's knowledge is being gradually submerged beneath a mass

of social detail. It is clear that the school curriculum for the last two decades of the twentieth century may well benefit from an inclusion of topics such as the welfare state, drugs and alcohol problems, unemployment, the use or abuse of leisure activities, the teaching of communism, perhaps above all some study of ethics and so on. But it is not obvious that these important social studies should be linked specifically to RE, the study of religion in schools. It is also not clear that there is educational virtue in **integrating** 'religion' with 'social problems' within the classroom; it may prove counter-productive, as Peter Gedge has indicated. The desire to 'integrate', in this context, arises, perhaps, in a desire for 'relevance' in the curriculum. And the call for relevance is often only another way of asking for the **instrumental** use of RE; what it is useful **for**. It is at this point that we may question the notion of extrinsic, utilitarian ends for education. We may see greater virtue in developing the minds of young people for the sake of that alone; in helping them to achieve that measure of autonomy that will enable them eventually to choose ends for themselves. If this book has raised into sharper relief genuine puzzles not previously recognized in religious education it will have achieved its philosophical objective.

References

- 1 See, for example, **RE-Aktuellt** (no. 4, 1976; no. 1, 1980; no. 2-3, 1980; and no. 4 1980). In these journals one can detect exhortations to students to hold religious or near-religious positions. There appears to be no attempt to analyse the notion of religion or to justify the inclusion of so many different social and psychological problems in the teaching of religion. Too much is merely assumed to be 'religious'. In a report prepared by Sven-Åke Selander, **Momentet Kristendom i gymnasieskolan** (rapport 17, 1979), no distinction is made between, on the one hand, teaching students (in terms of explanations etc .,) what a 'life-stance' is and, on the other hand, teaching students in such a manner that the student will come to see how a 'life-stance' can the better be achieved for themselves. The latter view is the one advocated and is a form of implicit 'confessionalism'. It advocates a first order form of experience in which a student is encouraged to **engage** in a non-educational quest ; a quest for a pattern of life that is 'true' for him.
- 2 Wilson, J., Williams, N., and Sugarman, B., **Introduction to Moral Education** (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 59-60 .
(Original emphasis)
- 3 Wilson, J., **Education in Religion and the Emotions** (London: Heinemann, 1971) p. 261, chapter 10 and passim.
- 4 Wilson, J., 'Taking religious education seriously' in **Learning for Living**, vol. 16, no. 1, 1976, p. 21. (Original emphasis)
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 22. (Original emphasis)
- 6 Wilson, J., op. cit., p. 163.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 175-176.
- 8 Wilson, J., op. cit., (1976) p. 23.
- 9 Op. cit., (1967) p. 177.
- 10 The influence of Smart's thinking, expressed for example, in his **Secular Education and the Logic of Religion** (London: Faber, 1968) seems clear in the **Schools Council Working Paper 36** (1971); in the work of Birmingham RE **Syllabus** and its accompanying handbook **Living together** (1975); in other Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabuses; in Michael Grimmitt's **What Can I Do In RE?** (Great Wakering: Mayhew-McCrimmon, 1973 and 1978); and essayists in **New Movements in Religious Education**, edited by N. Smart and D. Horder (London: Temple Smith, 1975). Other writings seem also to reflect Smart's thinking, including some of the essays in **World Faiths in Education**, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), edited by Owen Cole.

- 11 Taken from Smart, N., and Horder, D., op. cit., (1975),
chapter 1. Smart's original emphasis throughout.
- 12 Ibid., p. 21.
- 13 Syed Ali Ashraf, 'Islamic principles and methods in the teaching
of literature' in the **British Journal of Religious Education**,
vol. 1, no. 2, Winter 1978-1979, p. 54.
- 14 Ibid., p. 57.
- 15 Ibid., pp. 57-58.
- 16 Ibid., p. 55. emphasis added.
- 17 Smart, N., and Horder, D., (1975) op. cit., p. 20. Original emphasis.
- 18 Ibid., p. 21.
- 19 Cited in Grimmitt, M., (1973) op. cit., p. 27.
- 20 Smart, N., and Horder, D., (1975) op. cit., p. 13.
- 21 Smart, N., **The Philosophy of Religion** (New York: Random House,
1970).
- 22 Ibid., p. 8.
- 23 Ibid., pp. 14 and 16.
- 24 Ibid., p. 26.
- 25 Ibid., p. 3.
- 26 Ibid., p. 3.
- 27 Ibid., p. 4.
- 28 **Working Paper 36**, op. cit., p. 44.
- 29 Ibid., p. 53.
- 30 Smith, J. W. D., **Religion and Secular Education** (Edinburgh, The
Saint Andrew Press, 1975), p. 102. This passage, and others like
it in the RE debate in Britain, may be compared with, for example,
the article by Gert Nilsson in **RE-Aktuellt**, No. 1, 1980; and the
article by Lilian Nilsson in **RE-Aktuellt**, No. 4, 1980.
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- 38 **Fear and Trembling**, Problem 1 (Princeton University Press, 1968 edition.)
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- 41 On page 14.
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- 45 Cox, E., **Changing Aims in Religious Education**, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 96.
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ERRATA

A number of errors appear in the book for which apologies are made. The more important of these are:

- p5 first paragraph, line 3: read 'politics' not 'politica'
on line 6: read 'by' not 'be'
- p11 line 23: read 'or' not 'of'
- p15 line 13: read 'go' not 'got'
- p17 line 30: read 'I do not accept' not 'I do accept'
- p26 line 9: read 'marking' not 'making'
- p29 line 27: read 'he' not 'we'
- p32 line 5: read 'that' not 'than'
- p34 lines 19-20: read 'by a small' not 'by small'
- p44 line 6: read 'continue her education' not 'continue the education'
on line 22: read 'a means to an end' not 'a means to end'
on line 35: read 'reasonably' not 'reasonable'
- p45 line 16: read '(whatever they may be thought to be)' not '(whatever they maybe thought to be)'
- p50 line 2: read 'embraces' not 'ambraces'
on line 33: omit the word 'but'
- p57 line 3: read 'dispositions' not 'disposition'
- p58 line 13: read 'influence' not 'influences'
on line 18: read 'influences' not 'influence'
- p70 line 16: read 'well' not 'will'
- p116 line 8: read 'religions' not 'religious'
- p120 line 11: read 'his' not 'this'
- p121 line 17: read 'educating' not 'education'
- p132 line 29: read '— as though we could understand science' not '— as though we could not understand science'
- p141 line 21: read 'there *can* be no choice' not 'there be no choice'
- p142 line 15: read '(if we may claim' not '(it we may claim'

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